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A

CONTINUATION

OF

LETTERS

CONCERNING THE

CONSTITUTION AND ORDER

OF THE

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY;

ADDRESSED TO THE MEMBERS OF

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

IN THE

CITY OF NEW-YORK.

BEING AN EXAMINATION OF THE STRICTURES OF THE REV. DRS. BOWDEN AND KEMP, AND THE REV. MR. HOW, ON THE FORMER SERIES.

BY SAMUEL MILLER, D. D.

ONE OF THE PASTORS OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE SAID CITY.

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"*A Continuation of Letters concerning the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry; addressed to the Members of the Presbyterian Churches in the city of New-York. Being an examination of the strictures of the Rev. Drs. Bowden and Kemp, and the Rev. Mr. How, on the former series. By Samuel Miller, D. D. one of the Pastors of the First Presbyterian Church in the said City.*"

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CHARLES CLINTON,
Clerk of the District of New-York.

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LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IT is more than two years since I addressed you in a series of "Letters on the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry, as deduced from Scripture and Primitive Usage." The resolution to call your attention to that subject was reluctantly formed, after much deliberation, and in compliance with what appeared to me an evident and imperious demand of duty. A love of controversy makes no part of my character. Neither my taste nor my talents are by any means suited to the field of contention. But when a minister of the gospel perceives any thing which is likely to have an unfriendly influence on the church of Christ, to which he has solemnly devoted himself, every consideration of

faithfulness forbids him to be idle. Such influence I saw, or thought I saw, was likely to result from certain publications, and other efforts, which had been made by some respectable individuals among our Episcopal brethren, in this city, and in different parts of the state, for several years preceding. The nature and tendency of these efforts are well understood by many of you, but they ought to be understood by all.

For more than twenty years after the establishment of American independence, the Presbyterians of New-York dwelt in peace and harmony with their Episcopal neighbours. They well recollected, indeed, the long course of oppressions and provocations which they had suffered, by means of Episcopal influence, prior to the Revolution. They recollected that, for more than half a century, besides supporting their own churches, they had been forced to contribute to the support of the Episcopal church, already enriched and strengthened by governmental aid. They recollected in how many instances the fairest and most laudable exertions to promote the interest of their denomination, were opposed, thwarted, and frustrated, by the direct interference of the same favoured sect. But when our national independence and equal rights became established; when all denominations of Christians were placed on the same footing, with respect to the state, and left to enjoy their privileges together, the Presbyterians were disposed to forget every injury; to cover every former subject

of uneasiness with the mantle of charity; to dwell in equal concord and love with their brethren of every name. It was not supposed, indeed, during this period of tranquillity, that Presbyterians and Episcopalians were *agreed* in their views either of evangelical truth, or of ecclesiastical order; or that they considered all the points in which they differed as of small importance. But while both thought for themselves, and pursued their own views of doctrine and worship, they avoided an *unnecessary*, and especially, an *irritating* and *offensive* obtrusion of their points of difference; and, above all, never seem to have thought, on either side, of that system of proscription and attack, which our Episcopal brethren have since chosen to commence.

The formal and open commencement of this system may be dated in the year 1804. Previous to that period, indeed, several sermons, and other fugitive pamphlets, had evinced a disposition on the part of some individuals, to revive and urge certain claims, as unfounded in scripture as they are offensive to liberal minds. But in that year there appeared, in the city of New York, the first of a series of larger publications, which evidently had for their object a system of more bold and decisive proscription than had been ventured upon for a considerable time before. These publications, among other doctrines, were professedly intended to maintain and disseminate the following, viz. "That the power of ordination to the Christian "ministry is, by divine appointment, vested ex-

"clusively in Diocesan Bishops; that where these "Bishops are wanting, there is no authorized mi- "nistry, no true church, no valid ordinances; that, "of course, the Presbyterian, and all other non- "Episcopal churches, and ministers, are not only "unauthorized, and perfectly destitute of validity, "but are to be viewed as institutions founded in re- "bellion and schism; and that all who are in com- "munion with such non-Episcopal churches, are "aliens from Christ," "out of the appointed road "to heaven," have no interest in the promises of "God, and no hope but in his "uncovenanted "mercy," which may be extended to them, in "common with the serious and conscientious hea- "then." Books containing doctrines of this kind, had been published and sent abroad with much assiduity, for more than a year, before any Presbyterian came forward to refute them, or to vindicate primitive simplicity and order; and since that time, similar books have been printed, re-printed, new modelled, and circulated, especially in thecity and state of New-York, with a degree of zeal and perseverance altogether new and extraordinary.

Nor is this all. These books have been put into the hands of non-Episcopalians. Presbyterians have been personally addressed on the subject, and attempts made to seduce them from their church, on the express allegation that they were totally destitute of an authorized ministry, and of valid ordinances. And, that nothing might be wanting to fix the character and purpose of these measures, they

were accompanied with declarations, that a state of warfare with the Presbyterian church, on the subject of Episcopacy, was earnestly wished for, and considered as one of the most probable means of promoting the Episcopal cause.

It was not possible for one denomination of Christians to act in a more inoffensive manner towards another, than *we* had uniformly done towards our Episcopal brethren. We had never attempted to unchurch them. We had never, directly or indirectly, called in question the validity of their ministrations or ordinances. We had never, on any occasion, obtruded our particular views of church order, as essential either to the *being* or *prosperity* of the body of Christ. On the contrary, whenever we had occasion, from the pulpit or the press, to instruct our people on those points in which we differ from Episcopalians, it was always done in a manner respectful and conciliatory, and perfectly consistent with acknowledging them as a sister church; a sister, by no means indeed, in our estimation, free from error; but yet sufficiently near the primitive model to be regarded as a church of Christ. All this, however, did not secure us from the treatment of which you have heard.

Under these circumstances, when we were virtually denounced and excommunicated; when the name of a Christian church was denied us; when our people were warned to abandon the ministry of their pastors, under the penalty of being regarded as *rebels*

and *schismatics*, both by God and man; when more than insinuations of this kind were presented and reiterated, from the pulpit and the press, on every practicable occasion, and in almost every possible variety of form; when, by the frequency and the confidence with which they were brought forward, some in our communion were perplexed, others, more discerning and better informed, rendered indignant, and all appeared to feel the propriety of vindicating the abused ordinances of Christ;—it became at least *excusable* to say something in our own defence. It was no bitterness against our Episcopal brethren; no love of controversy; no restless ambition; no desire to intrude into another denomination for the purpose of making proselytes, that dictated an attempt to justify our principles.—The attempt was purely defensive, and was demanded by every consideration of duty to the souls of men, and of fidelity to our Master in heaven.

Impressed with this conviction, I addressed to you my *Letters on the Christian Ministry*. Such a manual appeared to me to be much wanted; a manual which was intended to present a concise view of the whole subject, without the useless appendages, and the offensive recriminations which have been too frequently admitted. In composing this work, it was my sincere aim to render it as free from every thing personal or irritating as possible. Accordingly I attacked no particular writer. I avoided even mentioning the name of any American who had written in opposition to that apostolic

truth and order which we maintain. My arguments were stated, as far as the nature of the undertaking admitted, in the abstract; and a studious care was exercised to exhibit the whole in language of the most mild and conciliatory character. In all this it was not supposed that offence could reasonably be taken by any, and least of all by our Episcopal brethren. As they had been in the *habit*, for several years before the appearance of my volume, of publishing, and distributing, even beyond the bounds of their own society, books, in which the Episcopal doctrine was warmly urged, and Presbyterian principles loaded with opprobrious epithets; it was supposed that they would scarcely think it very consistent or decent to attack with violence, if at all, a publication so moderate, so respectful, and so exclusively intended for Presbyterians. It was, therefore, my prevailing expectation, that the work would be considered as not belonging to the polemic class, and would be suffered to pass without a reply.

But in this I was mistaken. With all the mildness and inoffensiveness of their character, my *Letters* no sooner made their appearance, than murmurs of resentment, and threats of overwhelming refutation were heard from various quarters. These threats had not been long proclaimed, before attempts were made to fulfil them. The first who presented himself before the public, as an assailant, was Mr. *Thomas Y. How*, (since the Rev. Mr. *How*, of *New-York*,) who, in about six

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months after the publication of my volume, produced an angry and vehement pamphlet, which he announced as *introductory* to a more full discussion of the subject. Mr. *How*, after an interval of six months more, was followed by the Rev. Dr. *Bowden*, *Professor of Moral Philosophy*, *Logic*, *and Belles Lettres in Columbia College*. This gentleman, who had been long versed in the Episcopal controversy, and who, more than twenty years ago, stepped forth as a champion of the hierarchy, did me the honour again to take the field against me, and undertook in a work, at least formidable in *size*, to give a complete refutation of all my arguments, and to prostrate the Presbyterian cause. About the same time with Dr. *Bowden*'s two volumes, there appeared, on the same side, and with the same object, the first of a series of Letters addressed to me by the Rev. Dr. *Kemp*, *Rector of Great Choptank*, in *Maryland*. And finally, with this number, the Rev. Dr. *Hobart* has united himself, as an occasional remarker on my *Letters*, in the *Churchman's Magazine*, published in the city of *New-York*, for the contents of which he acknowledges himself, both as Editor and Proprietor, to be responsible.

To be fallen upon by so many assailants, and with so much vehemence, is a compliment as great as it was unexpected. My thanks are due to these gentlemen for conferring on my work a degree of importance, and unwittingly disclosing that it has made a degree of impression, which I had never

ventured to anticipate or to claim. I have also to thank them for another favour. Their violent attacks, and their numerous cavils, have induced me to examine the subject with more care, and to pursue my inquiries respecting it to a greater extent than I should probably otherwise have done. The result is a deeper conviction than ever of the weakness of their cause, and of the Apostolic character of our Church.

With respect to Mr. *How*'s pamphlet, it is written with so much heat and impetuosity; discovers such a singular want of acquaintance with radical parts of the subject; and breathes a spirit so evidently calculated, with all sober and impartial readers, to discredit the author himself, more than the object of his attack; that my first resolution, as well as the general advice of my friends, was to let it pass unnoticed. I could scarcely, indeed, form a more selfish wish than that all my opponents might write thus. And it is certain that Mr. *How* would never have received a syllable of public reply from me, had there been any reason to suppose that his work would fall into the hands of none but the discerning and well-informed. Recollecting, however, that all readers are not qualified to distinguish between assertion and proof, between lofty assumption and solid argument, I felt doubtful whether some remarks might not be usefully made, especially on some of the more extraordinary and exceptionable parts of his book. The appearance of Dr. *Bowden*'s work terminated my doubts. This work,

written in a style of more calmness, and rather more decorum than Mr. *How*'s; more respectable on the score of sober and grave reasoning; and discovering more acquaintance with the subject, appeared to me entitled to some reply. In making this reply, I determined to bring into one view, the most material allegations and reasonings of all the gentlemen who have honoured me with their notice; and, as they have taken care to praise and quote each other, they cannot be displeased at being associated together in my remarks.

And in the first place, my acknowledgments are due to these gentlemen, and particularly to Mr. *How*, for being so kind as to remove all uncertainty with respect to the real nature of the opinions which they hold. Dr. *Bowden*, it is true, does not appear very fond of committing himself by explicit avowals; but Mr. *How* manifests no scruple in declaring, in his usual "masterly" manner, that he considers Presbyterian clergymen as having no more right to administer sacraments, or to ordain, than so many "*laymen*" or "*women*;" that all their ministrations are *perfectly unauthorized* and *void*; that without Episcopal ordination, there is no ministry, no church; that no case of *necessity*, however *extreme*, can justify any minister or body of ministers, in attempting to ordain others, or to form churches, without the intervention of a prelate's hands; and that all who are not in communion with an Episcopal bishop, are *out of the church*, and have no *covenanted* title to salvation. *Letters*,

p. 16. 68, and elsewhere. Mr. *How* also lets us know that Dr. *Bowden* holds similar opinions; p. 68. and truly the Doctor himself repeatedly uses language which admits of no other construction. It is agreeable to find opponents thus candid and explicit. We now know the nature of the claim which these gentlemen advance, and of course, how to meet them. I am happy also to perceive, that in my former publication, I have neither misrepresented nor exaggerated their sentiments.—They are precisely such as I ascribed to the *third*, or highest-toned class of Episcopalians. It is to the claims of this class only, and not to the moderate and liberal part of that denomination, that the reasonings in the following sheets are intended to apply.

But while these gentlemen are very undisguised and decided in advancing their claims, they write in a manner strangely vague and obscure on another point. Even admitting, (what we cannot admit, for we know the contrary,) that the question whether Episcopacy was *in fact*, the primitive constitution of the church, were decided in favour of our Episcopal brethren; still another question remains, viz. Is a compliance with that constitution so unalterably and indispensably binding on the church, that there can be no church, no ministry, no ordinances without it? These questions are totally distinct, and ought never to be confounded. Yet Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* almost uniformly confound them; and seem to think that if the former ques-

tion be answered in the affirmative, the latter must of course be answered in a similar manner.—In a few instances, indeed, they admit the distinction to which I allude, and assert, that their only object is to establish the Apostolical institution of Episcopacy, without undertaking to pronounce on the consequences of rejecting it. But it is evident that, for the most part, they entirely lose sight of this distinction, and write as if the establishment of the fact, that Prelacy existed in the primitive church, must effectually destroy the character of all churches not found in possession of that form of government. Whether these positions so totally distinct are so generally confounded by my opponents for want of clear and distinguishing views, or with design, I presume not to say.—But every discerning reader will be on his guard against imposition from either source.

These gentlemen, indeed, themselves assert, with the whole body of Episcopal writers, that the apostles never intended to lay down a model of church government, which should be, *in all its parts*, perpetually binding: and, of course, that the church is not bound to be, *in all respects*, conformed to the apostolic model. I am not now inquiring whether this doctrine be correct or not. But if it be, how can the want of prelacy destroy the character and even the existence of the church? In what part of Scripture is it said, that every *other part* of the Apostolic government of the church is *mutable*, and may be modified by

human wisdom; but that dispensing with the single point of *Bishops*, is fatal to the whole? My opponents, then, even on their own principles, are far from having accomplished the task which they prescribed to themselves. They have never shown, and are not able to show, that prelacy was instituted by the Apostles; but even if they *could*, many links would still be wanting in the chain of proof, that this form of government is *so* necessary, that there can be no church without it.

Mr. *How*, for reasons which he himself best understands, has thought proper to assert, that my *Letters* "are well known to be the result of several years of laborious attention to the subject which they discuss." Another writer in the *Churchman's Magazine*, has made a similar assertion; and boasts that the advocates of the Episcopal church will not require as much time to answer, as was employed in writing them. I cheerfully yield to these gentlemen the palm of celerity and copiousness in writing; and even if the statement respecting the time employed in preparing my publication were true, it is not easy to see how it bears on the argument. What would it avail a culprit to show that the collection of the testimony which seals his conviction was the work of a month instead of a day? But the statement is not true. My attention to the Episcopal controversy had been very small, perhaps culpably so, until within a few months previous to the publication of my Let-

ters. When the printing was begun, not more than one third of the volume was written; and the greater part of it was actually composed during the *three months* which were consumed in passing the sheets through the press. But though the work was chiefly written with that haste which every one who has run a race with the press well understands; and amidst the feebleness of an habitual valetudinarian, as well as the distraction and fatigue of multiplied professional labours; it affords me some satisfaction to reflect, that, after the maturest deliberation, I see no cause to retract a single argument, or materially to alter a single statement. On the contrary, further reading and reflection have convinced me, that every argument, and every statement, notwithstanding all the contemptuous sneers, and confident assertions of my opponents, are capable of being irrefragably fortified.

Mr. *How* also endeavours to represent my work as an *unprovoked attack* on the Episcopal church, and to throw upon it all the odium of *aggression*. To those who are acquainted with the incontrovertible facts stated in the beginning of this letter, such a representation will appear something more than strange! If to state and defend the principles of my own church, after they had been frequently and violently attacked; if a calm and respectful plea against a sentence of excommunication from the church of Christ; if an attempt to show, that we, as Presbyterians, are not *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant*

of promise; if a work designed to prove that our ministry and ordinances have as fair a claim to divine warrant as those of our Episcopal brethren; and that they, in denying us the character of a church, and in consigning us over, with the heathen, to the uncovenanted mercies of God, act wholly without warrant—if these things constitute an unprovoked attack on the Episcopal church—then, indeed, I have been guilty of such an attack. But I am not afraid that any one who is acquainted with facts, and who understands the import of terms, will either bring such a charge himself, or consider it with respect when brought by others.

Another charge which these gentlemen concur in urging, is no less unexpected and extraordinary. It is, that I have written with great *bitterness*, and that even my moderation is *affected* and *insidious*. This is a point concerning which no man can be an impartial judge in his own case. But, after receiving so many respectable suffrages in favour of the mildness and decorum of my style; after receiving the acknowledgments of so many moderate and candid Episcopalians in different parts of the United States, both clergymen and laymen, that I had avoided asperity and bitterness to a very unusual degree; it is impossible to avoid suspecting that these gentlemen, (who, so far as I know stand alone in making this charge,) have felt irritated by statements which they could not deny, and by arguments which they could not refute; and that they have mistaken both for bitterness and

abuse. Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* never discover so much wounded feeling and irascible temper, as when they meet with intimations of any affinity between some of their high-toned doctrines, and those of *Popery*. The intimations of this kind which my book contains, were made neither lightly, nor with passion; but with a conscientious persuasion of their correctness. This persuasion remains with undiminished or rather with increased force. And it happens, unfortunately for these gentlemen, that similar charges of popish origin and tendency, have been brought against several of the same doctrines, by some of the most pious and learned Bishops of their own church. Nor can I forbear to add, that the pointed resentment which my opponents manifest at every suggestion of this kind, is calculated to excite the suspicion, that they feel it more easy to *rail* at such intimations than to *answer* them.

Dr. *Bowden* makes frequent and heavy complaints, that, in *citing authorities*, I have not been sufficiently careful to refer to the precise chapter and page. He rebukes me severely for the trouble which I have given him in this way; and more than once insinuates that my references were made in this general manner, either because I had never read the books quoted, or because I was unwilling the quotations should be fairly examined. Without stopping to answer the insinuation, I would ask this gentleman whether, in writing plain, didactic, pastoral addresses, such as my *Letters* were intended

to be, it is either customary or proper to attend with as much care to references, and to detail with as much exactness the history of every quotation, as in works of a controversial nature? If I do not misconceive both the point of propriety, and the actual practice of the best writers, it would have been vain parade, as well as needless scrupulosity, to croud my pages with references. The Professor's rebuke is therefore unmerited. But is Dr. *Bowden* himself free from the fault with which he charges me? He is not. After a number of severe, and certainly not very delicate remarks, on my want of precision in a few of my references; and, after solemnly promising to act in a more "scholar-like" manner on his part, he has, if I do not mistake, fallen, at least as frequently as myself, into the very omission of which he so heavily complains. This is as unpardonable as it is extraordinary. But it is only one among the numerous facts which daily prove that it is much more easy to see a *mote in our brothers's eye* than a *beam in our own.*

Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* both repeatedly insinuate, that I quote writers at "*second-hand;*" that I "*garble*" quotations; and that I frequently either entirely mistake, or wilfully pervert, their meaning. These are heavy charges; but they give me little concern, firmly persuaded that all who read my Letters, and compare my citations with the works from which they are derived, will need no other refutation. How far my opponents have a right to assume lofty airs about *mutilating quota-*

tions, or giving them with parade at *second-hand*, you will be better able to judge before you complete the perusal of these sheets. I have, indeed, read little—alas! by far too little. But I have read enough to perceive that all ignorance and all mistakes are not on the side of Presbyterians. And though I have sometimes been compelled to quote writers at second hand, and on trust, because their books were not within my reach; yet I have consulted a sufficient number of *originals* to detect arts of which their authors would have been wise not to invite an investigation.

But Dr. *Bowden* makes another complaint, which is still more extraordinary. He thinks me very censurable for not having stated, in addition to the arguments in support of our opinions, the principal answers, "the triumphant replies," which Episcopal writers have given to these arguments. In one case, particularly, he addresses me thus: "You cer-"tainly must have heard of, if you have not read, "*Slater*'s *Original Draught*, in answer to lord *King*, "which it has always been confidently said, made "his lordship a convert to Diocesan Episcopacy. "If you have heard of *Slater*'s book, but not read "it, you should have made a point of procuring "it, and of stating his answer, that your readers "might have a fair opportunity of judging for them-"selves." *Vol.* I. *Letter* 7. p. 186. I can assure this learned Professor, who so kindly undertakes to instruct me in my duty, that I both possessed and had read *Slater*'s work, long before I ever heard of Dr.

Bowden or his *Letters;* and that, however it impressed lord *King*, it was so far from converting me to Diocesan Episcopacy, that it rather served to confirm me in my Presbyterian principles. But is it possible that this complaint of Dr. *Bowden* can be seriously made? Did I not distinctly announce, in my *introductory* Letter, that my object was, not to write a full and complete treatise, but a small and popular manual? Did I not fairly apprize my readers, that this plan would "lay me under the necessity "of being every where extremely brief, and of to-"tally excluding many topics, both of argument "and illustration, which might be profitably intro-"duced?" And did I not, to relieve, in some measure, the difficulty thence arising, promise, that "no "arguments should be urged, but those which I "believed to have stood immoveably solid, after "every attempt to answer them?" Was it my duty, then; would it have been proper, after all this, when I felt myself obliged to omit many arguments on my own side, which were, in my view, powerful and important; to introduce arguments, many of them frivolous, and most of them destitute of real force, merely for the purpose of swelling my work into a number of volumes, and preventing it from being read by those for whom it was intended? I have the charity to believe, that if Dr. *Bowden* had indulged a moment's reflection, he would have been ashamed to urge a complaint so unworthy of his grave character.

Besides, if it was my duty to state in detail all

those arguments which the fond partiality of some Episcopal writers has been pleased to style "unanswerable," "triumphant," "demonstrative," &c. was it not Dr. *Bowden*'s duty to do the same with respect to the arguments of Presbyterian writers? But has he done this? If I do not mistake, every impartial reader will pronounce, that in my little manual, I have gone as far, if not further, in stating the arguments and replies of my opponents, than this gentleman has in his two volumes.

These gentlemen, in the course of their strictures, have allowed themselves frequently to employ language of which I cannot forbear to exhibit a specimen. Dr. *Bowden* charges me with "contemptible cavilling;" with "contemptible puerilities;" with "misrepresentations gross to excess;" with writing "nonsense," "palpable nonsense," &c. &c. &c. Mr. *How*'s pamphlet abounds with language, which I hope he will reconsider, in his cooler moments, with shame and regret. He charges me with "a continued strain of misrepresentation;" with "an outrage on decency itself;" with a construction "as puerile as it is disingenuous;" with "fanatical absurdity;" with "violations of the plain language of Scripture, as presumptuous as are to be met with in the entire annals of fanaticism;" with "talking like a deranged fanatic;" and with advancing allegations which I "ought to know, and cannot but know," to be groundless. In fact, he frequently imputes to me, *in terms* a little indirect, and softened, known and

deliberate falsehood. And on one occasion, he permits himself to address me thus: "You could not "possibly have adopted a mode of address more "calculated to sour the minds of your readers, or "better fitted to indulge the bitterness of your own "heart. It is indirect and insidious, covering un- "der the mask of moderation and kindness, all the "loftiness of pride, and all the rankling of passion." p. 16. Dr. *Hobart* represents me as writing with great "arrogance" and "bitterness," and even with *insidiousness*, a term which no intelligent reader needs to be told, implies *dishonesty*. I regret that such language has found its way into this controversy. I am not able to see that it aids the argument of those who employ it; and it certainly contributes nothing to the charity of Christian intercourse. You will not imagine, I am sure, that this language is capable of exciting in me a feeling of personal resentment or pain. But it is exceedingly to be lamented, that gentlemen of their station should indulge in a style so scrupulously banished from all dignified and polished society; that a person so long employed as one of them has been, in forming the *moral* principles and character of youth, should discover so little success in the discipline of his own temper; and that they have not all more highly appreciated the duty of being *examples to the flock*. It shall be my aim, in the following pages, to avoid all similar language. And if you should ever find me inadvertently betrayed into it, be assured it is contrary to my fixed resolution; and

that, when discovered, it will be a source of unfeigned regret. May we all remember, with the celebrated author of the *Ecclesiastical Polity*, that "there will come a time when three words uttered "with charity and meekness shall receive a far "more blessed reward than three thousand vo-"lumes written with disdainful sharpness of wit!"

But these gentlemen not only employ, on their part, what I must consider as exceptionable language; they also impute to me language scarcely less offensive or exceptionable than their own. Dr. *Bowden* says that I pronounce Episcopacy an *anti-christian usurpation*. Vol. I. p. 245. And Mr. *How* asserts, that I "brand prelacy as *the detested off-spring of ecclesiastical fraud and tyranny*." I can only say that no such expressions are to be found in my book; and that whatever there is in them which bears an opprobrious or indelicate character, is to be ascribed, not to me, but to the invention of my accusers.

I shall not attempt to follow these gentlemen through all their minute and tedious details. For this drudgery I have neither leisure nor inclination. It would be again to travel over the whole ground which I have already endeavoured to explore, and to exhibit in a just light; and which, after carefully attending to all that they have said, still appears to me to rest on immoveable foundations. After requesting you to peruse my former Letters a second time with care, and to compare them impartially with what my opponents have advanced, the

cause is cheerfully committed to your decision. All that I propose, at present, is to review some of the most plausible reasonings of these zealous and confident polemics; to point out a few of their more gross and palpable mistakes; and to show the candid reader how far he can rely on the statements of persons who discover so little acquaintance with more than one side of the controversy; and at the same time allow themselves to speak as if they engrossed all knowledge, and as if wisdom would die with them.

These Letters, my brethren, as well as the former series, are intended solely for your use. They are occasioned, indeed, by the strictures of the gentlemen whose names are mentioned in the title page; but I have not thought proper to address those gentlemen directly. With them I have no personal dispute. Though they have intruded into our Church for the purpose of attacking me in the peaceable discharge of my pastoral duties, I have still no disposition to do more than to act on the defensive. But to refute their cavils, to repel their unfounded and injurious charges, to lay open the weakness of their cause, and to expose their want of information on this subject, is a duty which I owe to you. This duty I will attempt to discharge; and in the execution of it, I hope you will follow me patiently.

LETTER II.

Comparative stress laid on Ecclesiastical Order by Presbyterians and High-Churchmen. The doctrine of the Jure-Divino Presbyterians briefly stated.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

Two of the gentlemen whose attacks I am called upon to repel, accuse me of misrepresenting the high-toned Episcopal doctrine which they avow, and endeavour to maintain. They impute to me a desire to excite prejudices against them, by insinuating, that they exclude all but Episcopalians from *salvation*. Mr. *How*, in particular, brings forward and urges this accusation with great zeal. I utterly deny the charge. I never intended to convey such an insinuation; and am persuaded that my Letters do not contain a single sentence which can be fairly construed as expressing it.

But I *have* asserted, that *such* Episcopalians as agree with these writers, exclude us from the *covenanted* mercy of God, and declare us to be destitute of all interest in the *promises* of salvation. I *have* asserted, that they pronounce us to be out of the church of Christ, and aliens from the covenant of grace. I *have* asserted, that, while they express a

charitable hope that such of us as depart from the Episcopal church from "involuntary ignorance or error," will find mercy; they uniformly consider and represent this mercy as extended to Presbyterians, in the same manner, and on the same principles, as to the *heathen;* that is, not in virtue of any *covenant engagement*, or *explicit promise;* but on the footing of general, unpledged mercy. I have said *this*, and this *only;* and all this, they have themselves, in effect, avowed, repeated, and gloried in with a zeal worthy of a better cause.

But these gentlemen insist, that however high and offensive *their* claims may be considered, *we*, on our part, advance claims as high and as offensive as theirs; and, therefore, on our own principles, have no right to complain. They urge this argument with much confidence, and seem to regard it as a triumphant answer to the charge of unscriptural assumption. Mr. *How* expresses himself thus: "Episcopalians lay no more stress on "external order than does the society to which you "belong. Who could have supposed it possible, "after seeing you through several pages, declaim-"ing against the monstrous pretensions of your "opponents, that they carry external order precise-"ly as far as your own *Confession of Faith*, and not "a tittle further." p. 16. Again he says, "You "inveigh bitterly against your Episcopal neigh-"bours, for asserting the exclusive validity of Epis-"copal ordination. But you equally assert the ex-"clusive validity of Presbyterial ordination; tell-

" ing us, that, without such ordination, there can " be no ministry; without a ministry, no church; " and without a church, no covenanted title to sal- " vation. In addition to all this, you assert the di- " vine institution of Presbyterial government, in all " its parts, excluding its habitual violators, cases of " unavoidable ignorance or involuntary error ex- " cepted, from the kingdom of heaven. If the " Episcopal doctrine is of a nature *nearly* allied to " the claim of Papal infallibility, your doctrine " must be the claim of Papal infallibility itself." p. 117. Nay, he asserts, that Presbyterians carry their ideas of the importance of external order *much further* than Episcopalians. p. 22, 23. " I " proceed to observe that Presbyterians go much " further than Episcopalians in their ideas of ex- " ternal order. Thus, not contented with making " Presbyterial ordination essential to the existence " of the church, and to all covenanted title to sal- " vation, they tell us that Presbyterial government " is, in all its parts, sketched out in scripture; that " it is the duty of all Christians to conform to it; " and that, in refusing or neglecting to do so, " they incur great guilt. The plan of ruling el- " ders and deacons, with mere temporal func- " tions; the whole system of church sessions, " Presbyterial assemblies, Synodical assemblies, " and General assemblies, they say, is prescribed " in the word of God. In fact, it is impossible " to carry external order further than these men " *carry it.* See the language which they hold!

"Presbyterial government, in church sessions, "Presbyterial assemblies, Synodical assemblies, "and General assemblies, is established by the "Apostles, and is the law of God's house. All are "bound to conform to it. Habitual disobedience "to any of the divine commands will exclude from "the kingdom of heaven. Thus all but Presbyte- "rians are consigned to perdition. And what re- "lief do they give? Why, simply, that there are "sins of ignorance and infirmity which may consist "with a gracious state. So that our opponents not "only make Presbyterial ordination essential to the "existence of the church, but they represent obe- "dience to their particular mode of ecclesiastical "government as a condition of salvation: placing "all who reject it on the ground of the general "mercy which, it is hoped, God will extend to per- "sons labouring under unavoidable, or involuntary, "error. And is not this sir, the *exact ground on* "*which those who depart from the Episcopal consti-* "*tution of the priesthood, are placed by the very* "*men against whom you so bitterly inveigh?*" This is such a favourite topic of declamation with Mr. *How*, that he can scarcely get through a single page, without directly or indirectly recurring to it. His coadjutors seem to be never better pleased than when joining in the same strain. And truly it wants nothing to render it a very plausible argument, but the single circumstance of having *some foundation in fact.* Of this, I am compelled to say, it is *totally destitute.*

To show that Mr. *How*, in writing thus, unjustly accuses our church, nothing more is necessary than to transcribe the following chapters from our *Confession of Faith*, and *Form of Government*. They are given *entire*, that there may be no suspicion of concealment or mutilation; that the several sections of each chapter may explain one another; and, I will add, that Mr. *How*, if he should ever happen to look into these pages, may have an opportunity of reading them, which, after perusing such remarks as are quoted above, I cannot suppose he has ever yet done.

Confession of Faith. Chap. XXV. *Of the Church.*

"I. The Catholic or universal church, which is *invisible*, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

"II. The *visible* church which is also catholic or universal under the gospel, (not confined to one nation as before under the law,) consists of all those throughout the world, that profess the true religion, together with their children; and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

"III. Unto this catholic visible church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, *in this life*, to the end of the world: and doth by

his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto.

"IV. This catholic church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible. And particular churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them.

"V. The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error: and some have so degenerated, as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless there shall be always a church on earth, to worship God according to his will.

"VI. There is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can the Pope of Rome, in any sense be head thereof; but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself, in the church, against Christ, and all that is called God."

Form of Government. Chap. I. *Of the Church.*

"I. Jesus Christ, who is now exalted, far above all principality, and power, hath erected, in this world, a kingdom, which is his church.

"II. The universal church consists of all those persons, in every nation, together with their children, who make profession of the holy religion of Christ, and of submission to his laws.

"III. As this immense multitude cannot meet

together, in one place, to hold communion, or to worship God, it is reasonable, and *warranted by scripture example*, that they should be divided into many particular churches.

" IV. A particular church consists of a number of professing Christians, with their offspring, voluntarily associated together, for divine worship and godly living, agreeably to the holy scriptures; and submitting to a certain form of government."

Form of Government. Chap. II. *Of the Officers of the Church.*

" I. Our blessed Lord, at first, collected his church out of different nations, and formed it into one body, by the mission of men endued with miraculous gifts, which have long since ceased.

" II. The ordinary and perpetual officers, in the church, are *Bishops* or *Pastors;* the representatives of the people, usually styled *Ruling Elders*, and *Deacons.*"

Form of Government. Chap. VII. *Of Church Government, and the Several kinds of Judicatories.*

" I. It is absolutely necessary that the government of the church be exercised under some certain and definite form: And we hold it to be expedient, and agreeable to scripture and the practice of the primitive Christians, that the church be governed by congregational, presbyterial and synodical assemblies. In full consistency with this belief, *we embrace, in the spirit of charity, those Christians*

who differ from us, in opinion or in practice, on these subjects.

" II. These assemblies ought not to possess any civil jurisdiction, nor to inflict any civil penalties: Their power is wholly moral or spiritual, and that only ministeral and declarative. They possess the right of requiring obedience to the laws of Christ; and of excluding the disobedient and disorderly, from the privileges of the church. To give efficiency, however, to this necessary and scriptural authority, they possess the powers requisite for obtaining evidence and inflicting censure: They can call before them any offender against the order and government of the church: They can require members, of their own society, to appear and give testimony on the cause; but the highest punishment to which their authority extends is to exclude the contumacious and impenitent, from the congregation of believers."

In these chapters, every line is marked with wisdom, moderation, and charity. They are so far from asserting that no church is entitled to the name of a church of Christ, but *our own*, that the *contrary* is clearly and unequivocally acknowledged. They are so far from maintaining, that there is no salvation out of the pale of our church, that they could scarcely have found words more strongly to express an opposite opinion, without running into unlimited latitudinarianism. They make the visible church to consist of *all those throughout the world, who profess the true religion*, together with

their children; and, lest the phrase, *the true religion*, might be construed to mean an *exact conformity with our own standards*, they declare that they consider as included in the visible catholic Church, many churches *less pure than their own*, and that they freely "embrace in the spirit of Charity, "those christians who differ from them, in *opinion*, "or in *practice*, on these subjects." They go on to state, that this visible church is the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no *ordinary* possibility of salvation; thus making express provision for the exercise of mercy in ways *extraordinary*, and therefore *unknown* to us. Could any thing be more guarded or remote from bigotry? These gentlemen, however, insist, that in the chapter of the *Confession of Faith*, (Chap. 27.) which treats of the *Sacraments*, it is formally declared, that "neither of "the sacraments may be dispensed by any other "than a minister of the word *lawfully ordained*." But what is this to the purpose? Who is a "Minister of the word lawfully ordained?" If any preceding or subsequent passage in our public standards, had asserted, or even intimated, that no minister is lawfully ordained, but one who has been set apart *exactly in our mode*, there would be some pretext for this cavil. But no such assertion or intimation, nor any thing that resembles either, is contained in the whole book. It prescribes the course of study, and the kind of trials which candidates for the ministry, in our church, shall be re-

quired to pass through, and it also directs the mode of their ordination: but it pronounces no sentence of invalidity on *other modes* of conducting these important concerns; nor does it give a hint, from which, by fair reasoning, such a sentence can be deduced.

But this is not all. While the *language* of our *Confession of Faith*, and *Articles of Government*, is catholic and charitable in a very remarkable degree, their *history* illustrates and confirms their language. They were drawn up by the *Westminster Assembly of Divines*, than which a more venerable body of ministers never convened. This illustrious ecclesiastical Council consisted of more than a hundred divines, besides the lay members. And it is remarkable, that *all* of these divines, excepting about *seven* or *eight*, had received *Episcopal* ordination, and *no other*. Is it credible that these men, assembled as ministers, judicially deliberating and acting as ministers, could have intended to pronounce their own ordination null and void? Or that they would frame articles declaring all such ordinations in future invalid? No; such a sentence was never pronounced; and I may confidently assert, was never thought of by a member of that assembly. While they declared the Presbyterian form of church government to be the apostolic and primitive plan; they explicitly acknowledged the validity of Episcopal orders and ministrations. And the same has been the language and the conduct of every Presbyterian church that ever existed on *earth*.

Ministers *Episcopally* ordained have frequently applied to be received into Christian and ministerial communion with Presbyterian churches, both in *Europe* and *America*. But did Mr. *How* ever hear of one of them being *re-ordained?* I will venture to say he never did. Ministers have offered themselves to the church to which I have the honour to belong, not only from the *Episcopal*, but also from the *Methodist* and the *Baptist* churches. But was a *re-ordination* ever attempted, in *any one* of these cases? I can confidently affirm that no such case ever occurred; certainly none ever came to my knowledge. In every instance in which it was ascertained that the minister applying to be received, had been regularly set apart to the sacred office, by the imposition of the hands of men authorized to preach and administer sacraments in their own church, he was freely received, and his ordination sustained as valid. Does this look like pronouncing our precise form of church order *indispensable* to a regular ministry, to valid ordinances, or to final salvation? Had we been accused of being zealous advocates for the doctrine of *Purgatory* or *Transubstantiation*, the charge would have been equally true, and equally creditable to the candour of its author.

But perhaps Mr. *How* will plead, that, although *our* church, in the language of her public standards, is, on the whole, liberal and conciliatory; yet that other branches of the Presbyterian body, particularly those with which Dr. *Mason*, and Mr. *M'Leod*

are connected, go the whole length of asserting the exclusive validity of the Presbyterian ministry and ordinances. Such is one of the arts to which this gentleman resorts, when he cannot find materials enough in our *Confession of Faith*, to satisfy his insatiable appetite for proscription and excommunication. But neither will this subterfuge avail him. He accuses *others* as unjustly as he accuses *us*. It is not true that the most high-toned Presbyterians on earth, go any thing like the length, in maintaining the necessity of our particular mode of constituting the christian ministry, that this gentleman and his friends do in asserting the exclusive validity of Episcopal ordination. And, although both Dr. *Mason* and Mr. *M'Leod* may hold some opinions concerning the Christian church in which I do not entirely concur with them; yet there cannot be greater injustice than to speak of them and their writings in the manner in which Mr. *How* has permitted himself to do. To what this mis-statement of their opinions is to be ascribed, it becomes not me to say. I dare not impeach the integrity of Mr. *How*. For acquitting his honesty at the expense of his understanding, he would not thank me: And to suppose that he has allowed himself to speak with so much positiveness of their tenets, without any acquaintance with them, would be as offensive as either.

But are there not some Presbyterians who hold that their form of church government was the apostolic and primitive form? Undoubtedly, many.

And are there not some also, who go further, and insist that this form is binding on the church, under all circumstances and states of society, and, of course, ought to be adopted in all ages? There are certainly some who go even this length. Well! my opponents will reply, is not this holding to the *divine right* of Presbyterian government? It is. And is it not, of consequence, going the whole length with us, and denying that there can be any true church, or valid ordinances without it? Certainly not. The conclusion has no more connexion with the premises, than with the most remote object in creation.

As both Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* have evidently yet to learn the sentiments of the *jure divino* Presbyterians, and as, for want of information on this point, they are groping in the dark, whenever they approach it; I will endeavour to enlighten this part of their path, and, if possible, prevent, in future, those perpetual wanderings, which are really much more calculated to excite the ridicule, or the commiseration, than the resentment of their Presbyterian readers.

The advocates, then, for the *divine right* of Presbytery, (I now speak of the most rigid class of them,) believe that, in the apostolic church every regularly organized congregation of christians was furnished with three classes of church officers, with a Bishop, (or Pastor,) Ruling Elders, and Deacons; that the bench of Elders, with the Bishop as their standing Moderator or President.

constituted the spiritual court, for directing all affairs purely ecclesiastical in the congregation; that the Bishops of a number of neighbouring congregations, were in the habit of statedly meeting together, not only to cherish a spirit of union and fraternal affection, but also to deliberate on matters of more general concern, than those of a particular church; that in these larger assemblies or Presbyteries, (or by whatever name they were called,) a delegation from the Eldership of each church attended with their Bishop; and that, either statedly or occasionally, (it matters not which, as to the principle,) the Bishops and Elders of much larger districts, convened under the title of *Synods* or *Councils*, for the purpose of discussing and deciding great questions, and of making general arrangements. This, they suppose, was the form of government which the Apostles, acting under the inspiration of God, established in the primitive church. They believe, moreover, that as this form of ecclesiastical polity was adopted by inspired men, it is the best form; that it was intended to be perpetual; that it is the duty of churches, in all ages, and in all states of society, to adopt it; and that in proportion as any deviate from it, they deviate from the simplicity and purity of the apostolic age, and contravene the will of God.

But, while this class of Presbyterians zealously maintain the principles which have been stated, they, at the same time, explicitly grant, that there may be *deviations* from this apostolic form of go-

vernment, without *destroying*, or, in any essential degree, *impairing*, the character of a Christian church. They suppose that imperfection attends every thing human. That although every church, as well as every man, is *required* to be in *all respects* perfectly conformed to the Divine will; yet that neither *any church*, nor *any man* is, *in fact*, thus perfect. They suppose that, among individual professors of religion, there may be all manner of variety as to the degrees of exemplariness which they manifest; and yet that they may all be entitled, in the judgment of charity, to be considered as *visible christians;* and further, that cases may arise, in which it would be difficult to decide whether a man's deviations had proceeded so far, as that he ought, on the whole, to be excluded from this class or not. In like manner, the Presbyterians of whom we are speaking, admit that there are churches which differ considerably as to the degrees of purity which they have preserved, but which, notwithstanding, are all entitled to the character of *visible Churches* of Christ. They suppose, indeed, that all deviations from primitive simplicity, whether in doctrine, in worship, or in government, are *blameable*, and *ought* to be *corrected;* but still, that such may exist, in a certain degree, without excluding those who are guilty of them from the class of *Churches*. And in what actual cases these deviations have become so numerous and important as to render them no longer Churches of Christ, but *Synagogues of Satan*, they *have seldom* undertaken to pronounce.

The most rigid Presbyterians have, at different times, both as individuals and judicatories; both by their writings, and their decisions, explicitly acknowledged different denominations of Christians to be true churches of Christ. They have acknowledged our *Congregational* brethren in *New-England;* the regular *Independents* in various parts of *Great-Britain;* the *Episcopalians* in *England* and *America;* the *Lutherans* in *Germany* and the *United States;* and the *Methodist* and *Baptist* denominations, as all churches of Christ. They consider all these, indeed, as more or less corrupt; and have, accordingly, at different times, and without reserve, written, preached, and printed their testimony against those corruptions; but still they have never said of any of them, that they had no church, no ministry, no valid ordinances, but acknowledged the contrary without hesitation or scruple.

In short, the high-toned Presbyterians, of whom we are speaking do not carry the divine right of *Church Government* further than they carry the divine right of *doctrine* and *worship* in the church. Nay, it may be asserted, that, without a single exception, they have always laid *more stress* on the *two latter* than on the *first*, as entering more immediately than that into the vital interests and character of the church. Now, it is well known, that this class of Presbyterians, as well as all others, freely admit that there may be departures from absolute purity, both in doctrine and worship, without *un-churching* those who admit them. They be-

lieve, for instance, that *Arminianism* is a doctrinal corruption; but yet they would shudder to pronounce that those churches which receive it, have no valid ministry or ordinances, or to deny that any of their members may be saved. They are persuaded, that in the primitive church there were no *Forms of Prayer* used in public worship; and that the introduction of them is unwarranted and inexpedient; yet I never heard of any one who considered this as so essential an innovation, as either to doubt the piety of those who used forms, or even to pronounce it absolutely *unlawful* to unite in worship conducted by a *liturgy*. They know that *kneeling* at the *Lord's Supper*, and the doctrine of *Transubstantiation* came into the church together, and have no doubt that together they ought to have been discarded; yet they do not imagine, that this mode of receiving is inconsistent with pious and acceptable communicating; much less that it vitiates the sacrament; and least of all, that it infers a belief in the grand popish error with which it was originally connected. I have known Episcopalians to receive the sacred bread and wine, *kneeling*, from the hands of a Presbyterian minister, when all the rest of the communicants were *sitting*; and have no reason to suppose that any other Presbyterian minister would have scrupled to comply with a similar application.

It is to no purpose to say, "that if these be the opinions of *jure divino* Presbyterians, they are inconsistent with themselves; for that a belief that

Presbyterianism was the apostolic form of church government, necessarily carries with it, on every principle of sober reasoning, a belief that there can be no church, no ministry without it." This conclusion is as illegitimate in reasoning, as it is false in fact. The Presbyterians of whom we are speaking, utterly disavow this doctrine which is, by inference, imputed to them; and declare, that, as it is not deducible from their principles, so it makes no part of their creed.

The warmest advocates of the divine right of Prelacy admit that a church may depart in many respects, from the primitive model, without forfeiting the title of a church of Christ? They consider the church of *Rome* as a true church of Christ, though a *degenerate* and *corrupt* one. In one of the *Homilies*, of the Church of *England*, drawn up by Archbishop *Cranmer*, and the other Reformers, it is expressly declared, that that church is not only "*idolatrous* and *unchristian*; "not only an *harlot*, as the scripture calleth "her, but also a *foul, filthy*, old *withered* harlot; "the *foulest* and *filthiest* harlot, that ever was "seen *. I do not contend for the *decency* of these epithets. That is no concern of mine. I state the real language of the church of *England*, as deliberately expressed in her Standards. And yet, while high-churchmen solemnly declare their belief in the doctrine of these *Homilies*, they ac-

* Homily *Against Peril of Idolatry*. Part III. page 216. Edit. Oxford, 1802.

knowledge the church of *Rome* to be a church of Christ; trace their *line of succession* through her; and uniformly acknowledge her ministry and ordinances to be valid. In fact, it is on the principle that it is *lawful* to depart from the exact pattern of the primitive church, with respect to rites, ceremonies, and discipline, that the church of *England* vindicates many things in her own system, which she acknowledges were neither enjoined nor practised in the days of the Apostles. Nay, many of her sons, and especially those who advocate the doctrine of my opponents, do not scruple to affirm, that the whole system of ecclesiastical government and discipline is mutable *, and may be lawfully modified according to human wisdom, excepting the single part, so dearly beloved, which respects the *three orders of Clergy*. Every thing else, in the external organization, they suppose may be altered, without affecting the essence of the church; but to touch this part of the body, they consider as the invasion of its vital organ.

Thus it appears, that the highest toned *jure divino* Presbyterians do not lay any thing like the stress on their form of church government, that Dr. *Bowden*, Mr. *How*, and other *jure divino* Prelatists do on the point of *Episcopacy*; that the charge brought against them that they un-church all who reject the Presbyterian government, is perfectly unfounded; not deducible from any of their

* See *Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity*, passim.

principles, and totally disavowed by them; that their public standards, their judicial decisions, and their most esteemed writers, all with one voice, acknowledge that there are true churches, a regular ministry, and valid ordinances, where Presbyterianism is wanting; and, of course, that the allegations of Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*, are not only unsupported by evidence, but brought forward directly in the face of all legitimate evidence. When these gentlemen, or either of them, shall produce a single volume or document, sanctioned by any Presbyterian church, or from the pen of any esteemed Presbyterian divine, which contradicts my statement, I shall then, and not till then, acquit them of calumniating our venerable Church.

But these gentlemen will, perhaps, ask, "Do we not find in the writings of many Presbyterian divines, *severe epithets*, expressive of strong *disapprobation*, applied to the Episcopal hierarchy? Have we not actually pointed out some instances of this kind?" Granted. And what then? May I not see an egregious fault in an acquaintance, and reprove him sharply for it, without deeming it so great as to expunge his name from the list of my friends, or to pronounce him a bad man? May we not consider and oppose as an error, that which we do not believe, at the same time, will destroy the character of a church? I am sure that no offensive language directed against Episcopalians, is to be found in the *Confession of Faith* of our church, and very seldom in our best writers. But if it were other-

wise, where shall we find language, to be compared on the score either of *indelicacy* or *severity*, with that which the church of *England* has formally directed against the church of *Rome**, while at the same time she acknowledged, and does still acknowledge, her ministry and ordinances to be valid.

Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* make much use of the society of *Quakers* in this controversy. They ask me, whether, amidst all my professions of liberality, I can consistently with our *Confession of Faith*, acknowledge the *Quakers* as a visible church of Christ? And if not, how I can find fault with *Episcopalians* for not acknowledging *us?* My only reply to all their declamation on this subject shall be short. It is not a *practical* question. The society of Quakers do not profess to have an ordained ministry, at all, in the sense of most other denominations of Protestants.—The question, then, whether we can acknowledge their ordinations, ministry, and sacraments to be valid, can never come before us; for none of these things make any part of their ecclesiastical system; and, of course, can never be offered to us to receive our sanction. I consider, therefore, all that my opponents have said on this subject, as a vain effort to obscure the merits of the real question, and as inconclusive as it is irrelevant to the controversy.

Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* speak much of "*covenanted*" and "*uncovenanted*" mercy. The latter

* See page 53.

candidly and repeatedly avows his belief, that all who are in communion with a church organized in the Episcopal form, are *in covenant* with God; and that *all others*, without exception, are *aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant of promise*, and have no hope but in the general *uncovenanted* mercy of God. We certainly can have no objection to his informing us what is *his* creed, and we thank him for being so unreservedly communicative on the subject. But he goes further. He undertakes to say that Presbyterians, on their part, hold a similar opinion; that they exclude from the Christian covenant all but *Presbyterians;* nay, that they pronounce all who do not embrace "the rigid peculiarities of *Calvinism*," to be in an unregenerate state, and coolly consign them to "uncovenanted mercy." Had Mr. *How* asserted that all Presbyterians are zealous advocates of the divine mission of *Mahomet*, it would have been, rather more ridiculous indeed, but not a whit more remote from fact than this statement. His position is not only not true, but there is not a shadow of foundation for it; nor can he produce a single Presbyterian writer, of respectable character, who says any thing that can be reasonably construed as bearing the least resemblance to this doctrine *.

* It is to be hoped that Presbyterians understand the Gospel too well to speak of "*uncovenanted mercy*" at all. The phrase itself is unscriptural; and if it convey any meaning, it is an erroneous one. Fallen creatures know of no mercy

Presbyterians (I speak now of *all* that I have ever known or heard of, particularly the most rigid among them) Presbyterians, I say, believe, that according to the tenor of the *Covenant of Grace*, salvation is *promised*, that is, secured by *covenant engagement*, to all who sincerely repent of sin, and unfeignedly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course they consider all who bear this character, to *whatever* external church they may belong, or even if they bear no relation to *any* visible church, as *in covenant* with God, as interested in his *great and precious promises*, and as in the sure and certain road to his heavenly kingdom—They know, indeed, and teach that it is the *duty* of all who believe in Christ, to connect themselves with his visible church; they teach also, that receiving the *seals* of God's covenant and attending on all the ordinances of his house, are solemnly enjoined, and productive of essential advantages. Nay, they go so far as to pronounce that he who neglects these ordinances, when he is favoured with an opportunity of attending on them, gives, in ordinary cases, too much reason to fear, whatever may be his declarations to the contrary, that he has no real love to Christ. But still they do not, and without contradicting the scriptures, they cannot, teach that the *means* of religion

but that which is *promised* or secured by the *covenant of grace*, in Christ Jesus our Lord. If Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* have discovered any other *kind* or *channel* of divine mercy, I can only say, they have not found it in the Bible.

constitute its *essence*, or that the *seals* of the covenant, *form the covenant itself.* The seal on a bond, is not itself *the contract*, but only the *evidence* of it. In like manner, the seals of the Christian covenant, are not in themselves the *promise* or the *engagement* either on the part of God or man; but are the constituted means of *recognizing* or *ratifying* a covenant transaction, supposed to have previously taken place in secret, when the person receiving the seal, embraced the gospel, and cordially devoted himself to Christ on the terms of the covenant.

I repeat it then, the doctrine of all Calvinistic Presbyterians is, that every one who loves the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and maintains a holy life, whatever may be the mistakes into which he may fall, or the prejudices against particular parts of evangelical truth and order which he may entertain; whatever the disadvantages under which he may labour, with respect to his ecclesiastical connexions; or even if he were placed in circumstances in which he never saw a place of public worship, a minister of the gospel, or a church officer of any kind, in his life; that every such person is *in covenant* with God, and has that *title* to salvation which is given by the *promise* of a faithful God to every sincere believer. How *much* error, how *much* infirmity, how *much* deviation from the external order which God hath appointed in his house, is consistent with true faith, we know not, nor has any Presbyterian, with whose person

or writings I am acquainted, ever attempted to decide. But that every one who *has* sincere faith in Christ, is in covenant with God, they, with one voice, proclaim and teach.

This simple statement also refutes another assertion, which Mr. *How* permits himself, without the smallest foundation, to make and repeat. The assertion to which I allude, is conveyed in the follow-lowing terms. "All of you declare baptism and "the supper to be *general conditions of salvation;* "representing them as seals of the covenant of "grace, without which, it is impossible to have "any ordinary or regular claim to the blessings of "that covenant. Such as habitually neglect these "ordinances, saving a little allowance for error, "you exclude from the kingdom of heaven.— "Intolerant and wretched bigots! To give so "much importance to the ceremony of sprinkling "water, or of receiving bread and wine! And to "tell us too, that it is impossible to have these or-"dinances, except at the hands of ministers *Pres-"byterially* ordained. How much better is all "this than the tale of Papal infallibility! How far "are you removed from catholic absurdity and "arrogance!" *Letters*, p. 117. Mr. *How* asserts that *all* Presbyterians believe and speak thus. But can he find *one* that does? I know of none; and am confident there is none. Our *Confession of Faith* says no such thing. On the contrary, it expressly declares, that persons to whom these ordinances are *never* administered, *may be saved;* and that those

who *do* receive them *may perish.* " But," says Mr. *How*, " Your *Confession of Faith* represents Bap- " tism as the only mode of admission into the vi- " sible church; it declares that out of the visible " church, there is no *ordinary* possibility of salva- " tion; and it maintains that Baptism ought not " to be administered by any but a minister of the " gospel *lawfully ordained.* Does it not follow " then, that without Baptism, there is " no ordi- " nary possibility of salvation?" No, it does not follow. His premises are incorrect, and his conclusion is equally so. With all his confidence, he blunders at every step. Every one who has read our *Confession of Faith*, knows its doctrine on this subject to be, that *all who profess the true religion*, are members of the visible church; that the *children* of such persons, by virtue of their *birth*, and of course *anterior to Baptism*, are also members of the church; and that Baptism is only the appointed *seal*, or solemn *recognition* and *ratification* of their membership. This is perfectly plain; and it cuts up by the roots every pretence for the statement which Mr. *How* has made.

With respect to Mr. *How*'s direct and repeated assertion, that Calvinistic Presbyterians make a belief in the doctrine of " Election," and the other, " rigid peculiarities of *Calvinism*," essential to our being in covenant with God, and that they represent all who do not receive these " pecu- " liarities" as given up to uncovenanted mercy, it

is difficult to answer it as it deserves, without speaking of its author in a manner in which I cannot permit myself to speak of a Christian minister. It is no arrogance to say that I am probably as familiar with the writings of Calvinistic divines, as Mr. *How:* and I can solemnly declare, that to the best of my recollection, I never met with one who expressed such a sentiment, or who gave the least reason to suppose that he held it: nor do I believe that Mr. *How* ever saw or heard of one. On the contrary, I have scarcely ever opened a volume by the most zealous *Calvinist*, in which a question of this kind was discussed, without finding an acknowledgment, either express or implied, of the *sincere piety*, and of course the *covenant title to heaven*, of many who were far from being Calvinists. But you will find, my brethren, before you have completed the perusal of these sheets, *some* apology for Mr. *How*. You will clearly perceive that he is not acquainted with the writings of *Calvin*, and that he does not *understand* the system of doctrines which is distinguished by the name of that great Reformer.

Mr. *How*, in his zeal to prove that Presbyterians are even more uncharitable than such high-church-men as himself and others, endeavours to throw great odium on a clause in the 10th chapter of our *Confession of Faith*, which is in the following words—"Much less can men, not professing "the Christian religion, be saved, *in any other way*

" *whatsoever*, be they never so diligent to frame " their lives according to the light of nature, and " the law of that religion which they do profess; " and to assert and maintain that they may, is very " pernicious, and to be detested." All that these words are intended to assert, is, that none of our fallen race can be saved *in any other way than through Christ.* The slightest perusal is sufficient to ascertain that this is their real meaning. But, even if the language of the clause itself had left this point doubtful, all doubt would be removed by attending to another clause in the same chapter, and only five lines distant from that which we are considering, which expressly recognizes the possibility of some being saved, who have never had an opportunity of hearing the gospel preached. The doctrine, then, of the passage alluded to by Mr. *How*, is simply this, That it is *false* and *pernicious* to teach that men may be saved *in any other way*, than through the atoning sacrifice, and sanctifying spirit of Christ. A position in which one would imagine all professing Christians, except *Socinians* and *Universalists*, must without hesitation, concur. But Mr. *How* exceedingly dislikes it, and is determined to hold it up to detestation and abhorrence, as asserting that none who have not been favoured with the preaching of the gospel can possibly be saved; and as consigning the whole heathen world to inevitable perdition. By what management does he attempt to do this? By faithfully transcribing the

clause, and laying it before his readers in a fair and unmutilated form? Not at all. Had he done this, his purpose would have been defeated. Every reader would instantly have recognized in the language of our *Confession of Faith*, a perfect coincidence with that of the Scriptures *. But by a contrivance, which it will hereafter be seen is not unusual with this gentleman, he first essentially alters the passage, and then presents it, regularly marked with inverted commas, as if it were the real language of the article. What that language in *fact*, is, you have already seen. Mr. *How* declares that it is as follows—"They who having never heard the Gos-"pel, know not Jesus Christ, and believe not in "him, cannot be saved, be they never so diligent "to frame their lives according to the light of na-"ture." *Letters*, p. 25. Having thus taken out of the passage an important clause which it *does* contain, and added to it what it does *not* contain, he holds it up to his readers as consigning to inevitable perdition, the whole heathen world. And assuming this as the acknowledged construction, he vehemently declaims against it as "uncharitable," "cruel," a "position of deep-toned horror," and calculated to "fill the rational mind with dismay."

But the most wonderful part of the story is yet to be told. It is a fact, that one of the *Thirty-*

* See particularly *Acts* 4. 12. *John* 14. 6. *John* 17. 3. *Gal.* 1. 6, 7, 8.

nine Articles of Mr. *How*'s own church, contains precisely the same declaration that he, with so much violence, condemns in our *Confession of Faith.* The article referred to, is the *eighteenth*, which is in the following words. "They also are to be had "accursed, that presume to say, that every man "shall be saved by the law or sect which he profes- "seth, so that he be diligent to frame his life ac- "cording to that law and the light of nature. For "holy scripture doth set out unto us only the name "of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved." The only difference worthy of attention, is, that the Presbyterian Confession of Faith pronounces the *doctrine*, that men may be saved otherwise than by Christ, "*pernicious*" and to be "*detested.*" Whereas, the Episcopal article, more harshly, declares, that the *persons* who hold it, are to be *had accursed.* This article Mr. *How* has solemnly subscribed, and the doctrine contained in it, he has canonically sworn to preach and support. And yet he declares "he has no power to ex- "press the feelings with which this *most de-* "*testable doctrine* fills his bosom." To what can we ascribe this conduct? I am unable to think of it without the deepest astonishment and horror!

In my *introductory* Letter, in a note, p. 17, I expressed myself in the following terms. "Se- "veral distinguished writers in Great-Britain, who "have lately espoused with much warmth, the

" exclusive Episcopal notions under consideration, " do not scruple to assert, that *all* who " are in " communion with the Episcopal church, are in " communion with Christ," and in the " sure " road to salvation." They deny that there is " any *pledged* or *covenanted* mercy; in other " words, that there are any *promises* given in " the gospel to persons who are not in commu- " nion with that church, however sincere their " faith and repentance, and however ardent their " piety. And, accordingly, they turn into ridi- " cule every attempt to distinguish between a " *professing* Episcopalian, and a *real* Christian." —With this passage Mr. *How* is much offended. He not only rebukes me with great severity for penning a paragraph so " calculated to deceive " and inflame my readers;" but he goes further, and declares that the sentiment which I ascribe to the writers in question, is not held by them; and that I " ought to know, and cannot but " know," that they do not hold it. Thus charging me in pretty direct terms with writing a known and deliberate falsehood.—p. 14, 15.

As I had mentioned no *names*, and as Mr. *How*, of course, could not certainly know to what particular writers I alluded, it is somewhat singular that he should venture a contradiction with so much confidence and indecorum. But as neither delicacy nor caution enter into the plan of controversy which this gentleman has adopted, I no longer wonder at any extremes of his rash-

ness or violence. The truth is, that in the paragraph above stated, I have not only not *intentionally* misrepresented any one, but am also still persuaded that I fell into no *real* error. But, however this may be, all that I said, was advanced on the authority of a respectable divine of the Church of *England*, now living, who expresses himself in the following words. " Mr. *Daubeny*, in like " manner, sees no difference between the true " church of Christ, and the national church; " represents *professed* membership with this na- " tional society as forming the line of distinc- " tion between the world which lieth in wicked- " ness and a state of condemnation before God, " and those who are in a state of sanctification " and salvation; and speaks indiscriminately of " all who have been regularly baptized, and re- " main in the established communion, as " mem- " bers of Christ's body," " partakers of Christ's " spirit," the " peculiar property of Christ," and " as having " a peculiar interest in him:" in " other words, as " translated from the world," " delivered from the powers of darkness," and " heirs with Christ of an eternal kingdom." " *Guide to the Church*, p. 15, 16, 171, 172, 234 " and *passim*. " Every Christian," that is, every " *professed* Christian, he says again, after being " called to re-consider the subject, who is " living " in a state of communion with the church," " namely, with that " visible society" of Chris- " tians, where the Episcopal form of govern-

" ment is to be found, *is in the sure road to sal-*
" *vation.*" *Appendix, Letter* 7, 452. *Antijaco-*
" *bin Review*, Feb. 1800, p. 145. The distinc-
" tion between the national establishment, and
" the true church of Christ, Mr. *Daubeny*
" teaches, is " unnecessary," and a " false dis-
" tinction." " That," he says, " may be a true
" church in which the pure word of God is *not*
" preached." *Appendix*, p. 252, 475, 476. Mr.
" *Polwhele* considers it among the *greatest extra-*
" *vagancies*, to think unfavourably of the state of
" many, " who every Lord's day attend the ser-
" vice of the church." *Letter* to Dr. *Hawker*,
" p. 38. Dr. *Paley*, Dr. *Croft*, and their admirers,
" teach that the scripture titles of " elect," " cal-
" led," " saints," " being in Christ," &c. " were
" intended in a sense common to *all* Christian
" converts," and that, " the application of such
" titles to distinguish individuals amongst us, the
" professors of Christianity, from one another,"
" argues the greatest ignorance and presumption.
" Dr. *Paley*'s *Visitation Serm. at Carlisle*, 1777, p.
" 11, 12. Dr. *Croft*'s preface to his *Thoughts*,
" &c. and Mr. *Clapham*'s Sermon. In further
" conformity to this doctrine, the scripture terms
" and phrases, " conversion," " regeneration," the
" becoming " dead to sin," and " alive from the
" dead," the being made " sons of God, from
" children of wrath," these divines tell us, *now*
" mean *nothing*," that is, as they explain it, " no-
" thing to *us*, or to *any one educated in a Christian*

"*country* *." What Mr. *How* himself may think of his own prudence, after reading these extracts, I know not; but I should suppose that *others* could be at no loss what opinion to form on the subject.

Mr. How refers frequently, and with much triumph, to a passage toward the close of my Letters in which he considers me as having advanced a claim as high and offensive as his own, and also, as having contradicted myself. The passage alluded to, is one which occurs in discussing the doctrine of *Uninterrupted Succession*, and is in the following words. "If, as we have proved in the foregoing "Letters, the right of ordination, according to "Scripture and primitive usage, belongs to *Presby-* "*ters*, it is evident that the succession through "*them*, is as valid as any other: or rather, to speak "more properly, it is only so far as *any* succession "flows through the line of *Presbyters*, that it is

* Overton's *True Churchman ascertained.* 2d Edit. p. 115—118. It will probably be contended by Mr. *How* and his friends in this controversy, that Mr. *Overton*, though a good *Churchman*, is not accurate in his representation. He has indeed been loaded with much abuse by many for his fidelity. But it unluckily happens, that the editors of the *Christian Observer*, though warm Episcopalians, and men of great talents and learning, fully justify Mr. *Overton* in the substance of his representation. They think, it is true, that he scarcely does justice to Mr. *Daubeny;* but they acknowledge at the same time, that Mr. D. has too frequently expressed himself in a manner calculated to give countenance to the opinions ascribed to him.

"either regular or valid. It is the *laying on of* "*the hands of the Presbytery*, that constitutes a "scriptural ordination; and it is because Episco-"pal Bishops are *Presbyters*, and assisted in all "ordinations by *other Presbyters*, that we consider "their ordaining acts, on the principles of Scrip-"ture and primitive usage, as valid." In this passage, Mr. H. asserts, that I have pronounced Presbyterian ordination *alone* to be valid, and, of course, have unchurched all who are destitute of it. Now as the whole strain of my volume is of a different kind; and as, in various parts of it, an opposite doctrine is explicitly avowed and maintained, candour, I think, should have dictated to this gentleman a more favourable construction, even supposing my language to admit of that which he puts upon it. But, in truth, when this passage is examined, it will be found that the doctrine which it contains, is so far from being high-toned and offensive, that it is taking the very *lowest* ground that any denomination of Christians, who hold to a regular ministry at all, have maintained. What does it say? It affirms that ordination by *Presbyters* is valid, and that it is the *only* ordination which the Scriptures warrant. Now the Presbyterian *Pastors*, the Episcopal *Bishops*, the *Ministers* of the Independent, Lutheran, Methodist, and Baptist churches, are all *Presbyters*; and, of course, are all empowered to ordain. The doctrine of the above cited passage, therefore, instead of being high-toned or exclusive, recognizes as valid the ordinations of every

church on earth, which receives and acts on the principle that *clerical* ordination of *any kind* is necessary.

But after all, how has the Episcopal claim been construed by impartial judges? If, as these gentlemen assert, the most zealous and high-toned advocates of Prelacy, do not lay greater stress on their particular form of church order, than Presbyterians do on theirs; if they make no greater nor more offensive claims; how has it come to pass that the contrary has been, by all parties, so generally understood and acknowledged? How has it happened, that every respectable Presbyterian who ever wrote on this subject, has utterly disclaimed sentiments in anywise resembling those of the *Jure divino* Prelatists? How has it come to pass that many warm friends of Episcopacy have reprobated the claims of some of their own denomination, as peculiar to themselves, as well as groundless and offensive? How could such men as Archbishop *Wake*, be so grossly deceived? *He*, in a letter to a Presbyterian Minister of *Geneva*, in the year 1719, pronounced the high-churchmen of his day, for advancing exactly such claims as those of Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*, to be *madmen*.* Was this respectable prelate; were the great body of the most eminent writers, both Presbyterian and Episcopal, who have treated of this subject for the last two hundred years, all ignorant

* See my former *Letters*, p. 273, 274.

and mistaken? I must be allowed to believe that they were at least as learned, and discerning, and that they understood the points in dispute, at least as well as either Dr. *Bowden* or Mr. *How*.

Dr. *Bowden*, and Mr. *How*, more than once accuse me of departing from the doctrine of our *Confession of Faith* concerning the christian ministry; and express some apprehensions that I may be called to an account by my own church, for deviating from her standards. The former of these gentlemen also observes, that, before he saw my *Letters*, he had supposed me to be a *Presbyterian;* but that to such *Presbyterianism* as mine both *Calvin* and *Knox* were entire strangers. The best refutation of these charges will be found in the facts exhibited in the following sheets; the slightest attention to which will convince you, that, until my opponents become *better acquainted* with our *Confession of Faith*, and also with the writings of Presbyterian Reformers, they are but ill qualified to pronounce what system agrees or is at variance with these great authorities.

But although I am not conscious of departing either from the letter or the spirit of that *Confession of Faith* which I have solemnly subscribed; and although I am confident that my Presbyterianism is substantially the same with that of *Calvin* and *Knox;* yet let us remember that we are to *call no man*, or body of men, *Master on earth. One is our Master, even Christ.* HIS WORD is the sole standard by which, as Christians, or as Churches, we must stand

or fall. Happy will it be for us, if we can appeal to the great Searcher of hearts, that we have not followed the traditions and inventions of men, but the *sure word of prophecy*, which is given us to be *a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path, to guide us in the way of peace!*

LETTER III.

Testimony of Scripure.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IN the second Letter of my former series, I endeavoured to establish the principle, that the *only* testimony by which the controversy in question ever ought to be, or can be decided, is that of *Scripture*. The word of God is the only perfect and infallible rule of faith and practice. The moment we quit this ground, we are plunged into all the uncertainty of tradition, and into all the confusion of contradictory testimony. The moment we quit this ground, the defence of *Protestantism* against the *Papists* is impossible. In this general principle, our Episcopal brethren concur. They acknowledge that the question before us is a matter of *fact*, to be ascertained by a sound interpretation of Scripture. And yet, for the most part, they have no sooner made the acknowledgment, than they contradict themselves, by setting human authority above the inspired volume.

In this inconsistent course Dr. *Bowden* has signalized himself. He has, indeed, pursued it with a degree of boldness which is truly rare. He does not think it necessary even to save appearan-

ces. Instead of assigning to Scripture the first and highest place; instead of beginning with it, and permitting it to stand on its own proper eminence, he *begins* with the *Fathers!* Nor is this all. As if afraid of examining and exhibiting the testimony of the Fathers in their *natural order*, from the apostolic age downwards, he begins with the Fathers of the *fourth century;* reasons backward; assumes the corrupt principles and language of that age as genuine, and then employs them to interpret the primitive writers; and thus endeavours to make his readers believe that the order of the Church was the same in the *fourth*, that it had been in the *first* century; and that the words *bishop*, *elder*, *deacon*, meant exactly the same thing in the days of *Eusebius*, *Basil*, and *Jerome*, that they had done in the days of the Apostles. I thank Dr. *Bowden* for the important concessions which this course of reasoning tacitly discloses. I thank him for the manifest unwillingness which he discovers to encounter either the testimony of *Scripture* alone, or the testimony of the *early Fathers* alone. His very *arrangement of evidence* speaks more than volumes. Of the *fairness* of this arrangement, I say nothing. No reader of the smallest discernment needs a single remark to aid him in judging of this point. But I could scarcely have asked for a more humiliating confession of the weakness of his cause, and of his distressing consciousness that neither Scripture nor early antiquity will bear him out in his claims,

than is to be found in this management, which he, no doubt, considered as a master stroke of policy. But this gentleman goes a step further. After conducting his readers through a catalogue of quotations, placed in retrograde order, from the fourth century upward to the apostles;—after presenting to them a corresponding series of pictures in an inverted, and therefore deceptive light;—and after bringing them, wearied and perplexed, to the dividing line between the Fathers and the canon of Scripture, he expresses himself in the following terms—"As Episcopacy appears from a cloud of "witnesses to be the government of the church "at the close of the apostolic age, *it can never* "*be admitted that any thing in the New Testament* "*militates against this fact.*" *Letters*, I. p. 240. The plain English of this declaration is, "The "controversy is to be decided by the Fathers. "In approaching the inspired volume, we are "*previously to take for granted* that it does not, "and cannot contain any thing contrary to their "testimony. And even if it *appears* to contain "facts or principles inconsistent with their wri-"tings, we are to draw our conclusions from the "*latter* rather than the *former*. Were the scrip-"tures to teach otherwise than the Fathers, we "could not believe them."—I do not say that this doctrine is, in so many words, avowed by the reverend Professor; nor even that he distinctly recognizes such a monstrous position in his own mind: but I will say, that such is the *spirit* of the

principle which he lays down, and that I verily believe him to have been governed by it in all his reasonings.

But although my opponents discover so much reluctance to be judged by *the law and the testimony*, I hope, my brethren, *we* shall never so far forget our character as Christians and Protestants, as to suffer our faith or practice to be tried by any other test. I will, therefore, request your serious and impartial attention to some further remarks on the scriptural evidence relative to the subject before us.—You will not expect me, however, again to go over the whole ground of the scriptural argument. I shall only advert to a few points on which either the most plausible or the most exceptionable strictures have been made on our principles, as formerly advanced and defended.

I again assert, then, that there is not to be found in the whole New Testament a single doctrine or fact, which yields the least solid support to the cause of prelacy; but that, on the contrary, the whole strain of the evangelical records is favourable to the doctrine of ministerial parity.

Dr. *Bowden* still insists that the *Angels* of the seven Asiatic churches, spoken of in Rev. ii. and iii. were no other than *diocesan bishops*. But really he does little more than assert and re-assert this, without producing any proof that deserves to be considered even as plausible. I had asked, "Is it certain that by these *Angels* are meant *in-*

"*dividual ministers?*" Dr. *Bowden* replies, "I "think there can be no doubt of it." A very strong argument, it must be acknowledged! But unfortunately there *is* much doubt of it. Some of the most learned and able Episcopalians that ever lived, have not only *doubted*, but *denied* it. And Dr. *Mason* has lately shown, with a force of argument which, in my opinion, no impartial mind can resist, that the title of *Angel* in this portion of scripture, is a symbolical term, intended to express the *ministry collectively* of each of those churches; that both the phraseology and matter of the addresses made to the angels are, in several instances, such as could only be directed to collective bodies; and that to consider the title as designating an *individual*, is a construction attended not only with insuperable difficulty, but with manifest absurdity *.

But, admitting that this term designates *individual* ministers, does it follow that they can be no other than *diocesan bishops?* By no means. The *angels* of *Ephesus*, *Smyrna*, &c. might have been, as was observed in my former *Letters*, the *Moderators* of the Presbyteries of those cities respectively; or they might have been the *Senior pas-*

* See that gentleman's very luminous and able *Review* of the *Episcopal Essays*, in the *Christian's Magazine*. This work, which I consider as one of the ablest periodical publications that ever appeared, ought to be in the hands of every one who wishes to attain clear and sound views of "Evangelical truth and order."

tors, to whom, on account of their standing and age, all communications intended for the churches in which they ministered, were, by common consent, directed. The Rector of *Trinity Church*, in the city of *New-York*, has *five* congregations under his pastoral care, and is aided by the labours of several assistant clergymen; yet this rector is not, as such, a bishop; nor are his assistant clergymen inferior *in order* to him. The whole city of *Edinburgh* in *Scotland*, is *one Parish*, while there are near twenty churches, and more than twenty ministers, within and belonging to that parish; still all these ministers are ecclesiastically equal, excepting that there is a Moderator of the city Presbytery, who has certain powers vested in him, for convening the body, and preserving order during the sessions; and to whom, also, all letters are directed, and all communications made. And yet this is not considered as at all infringing the doctrine of Presbyterian parity.—In truth, neither the *title* of *Angel*, nor the *addresses* made to those on whom it was bestowed, nor any of the *powers* implied in these addresses, give the least countenance to the system of prelacy; and to suppose that they do, is as gross an instance of begging the whole question in dispute, as can well be produced.

Dr. *Bowden* appears, indeed, to be sensible, that the Scriptures, left to speak for themselves, by no means decide that the *angels* in question were *prelates:* he, therefore, has recourse to *Irenæus*, *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, *Eusebius*, *Ambrose*, &c. to

help him out in his difficulty. *They*, it seems, assert that these *angels* were the *bishops* of the respective churches mentioned in connection with their names. But supposing these Fathers to be, in all respects, credible witnesses; and supposing, too, that their assertion is founded, not on conjecture, but authentic records; it still remains to be ascertained in *what sense* they use the word *bishop*. What *kind* of bishops do they mean? Such bishops as the Presbyterian, and the great body of the Reformed Churches, allow to have existed in the days of the apostles, and still retain? or such as our Episcopal brethren contend for? Dr. *Bowden* undertakes to assert that they were of the *latter kind*; but he says it without authority; for the Fathers whom he quotes as witnesses, do not say so. They might have been *scriptural bishops*, without, in the least degree, serving the Episcopal argument.

Dr. *Bowden* endeavours to press the learned *Blondel* into his service, by representing him as admitting that the *angels* of the Asiatic churches are addressed as "having jurisdiction over both "clergy and laity;" and thus by implication as acknowledging the existence of *diocesan Episcopacy* in the apostolic age. This is a mistake. *Blondel* says no such thing. After investigating this subject perhaps as profoundly as any man ever did, he tells us, that during the apostolic age, and for a considerable time after, Bishop and Presbyter were reciprocally one and the same; that these were com-

bined into *Classes* or *Presbyteries;* that the eldest *minister, pastor*, or *bishop* belonging to the Presbytery, was, by virtue of his seniority, *constantly the moderator;* that when he died, the *next in age* succeeded him, *of course*, and continued to hold the place during life.—" These senior pastors," says he, " had a certain singular and peerless " power, such a power as *all moderators*, after " whatsoever manner constituted, ever had, and " ever will have, belonging to them. Neither was " the moderator of any of these sacred colleges, " chief among his colleague Presbyters, as a " Presbyter, or as one placed in higher order " above all the other Presbyters; but as the " *eldest* and *first ordained* pastor. Nor did the " rest *as Presbyters*, but as *younger* Presbyters, " and afterwards ordained, yield the moderator- " ship to him. His office was to exhort the bro- " therhood; to war a good warfare; to commend " them to God by prayer; to gather the Presby- " tery; to give them a good example; and to de- " clare himself to be a diligent messenger of " God to mankind. And, therefore, as Christ " does in his admonitions to the angels of the " Asiatic churches, both the good and the evil " deeds of the churches might be imputed to " these moderators."—And again he says, " *Li-* " *nus*, as he was a *bishop*, had for his colleagues " *Clement* and *Anacletus*, who were shortly after " ordained bishops, with himself, in the same " church of Rome. But as he was the *exarch*

" or *moderator* of the *brethren*, he neither had, " nor could have any *colleagues*, (seeing the *mo-* " *deratorship* can only fall to one person at once) " but only *successors*. There was a plurality of " Bishops, Presbyters, or Governors, at the same " time, and in the same church. All these Pas- " tors or Bishops, on the very account of their " *Presbyterate*, were endued with *equal power and* " *honour*. The *moderator* was *subject* to the " *Presbytery*, and obeyed its commands with no " less submission than did the meanest of their " number. He had the chief power in the col- " lege of Presbyters, but had *no power* over the " college itself." And, as if this learned man had been aware of every cavil that ignorance or sophistry could suggest, he expressly compares these *ancient moderators*, with the *moderators of Presbyteries*, in the reformed churches of *Scotland* and *France*, and assigns to the former no more power or pre-eminence than belongs to the latter. *Blondelli Apolog. Præfat. pag.* 6. 7. 18. 35. 38. I make no comment on Dr. *Bowden*'s perversion of these plain declarations. If he fell into it *ignorantly*, he is to be excused; if *wilfully*, no reader will be at a loss for appropriate reflections.

Of the same character, and equally destitute of force, is all that Dr. *Bowden* has advanced to show that *Timothy* and *Titus* were *prelates*. After filling about thirty pages with what he calls his *proofs* of this point, he will really be found, when closely

examined, to have done little more than beg the whole question in dispute.

He insists that *Timothy* and *Titus* were not sent to *Ephesus* and *Crete* in the character of *Evangelists;* that they had finished all the labours which belonged to them in this character, *before* they went thither; and that their principal duties in those places were of an higher kind, and appropriate to an higher office. Nay, he formally sets it down, in a long catalogue, as one of my "unfounded assertions," that I represent them as acting in that capacity in the *Ephesian* and *Cretian* churches. Has Dr. *Bowden* ever read that portion of the New Testament which is called the *Second Epistle to Timothy?* Does not the apostle *Paul* say to *Timothy*, in that Epistle, *Do the work of an Evangelist?* And was this written *before* he went to *Ephesus?* Truly, when this gentleman can permit himself, with so little ceremony, to contradict an inspired Apostle, I need not wonder that others fare so roughly in his hands. Nor will it afford any relief to his cause, to cavil about the meaning of the word *evangelist.* Whatever it *then* meant, or may *now* mean, it is certain that *Paul* applied it to *Timothy*, and that after he had been sent on his Ephesian mission. And if it were applied to *Timothy*, no good reason can be assigned why it may not, with equal propriety, be applied to *Titus.* In fact, if it be conceded that the former was an *Evangelist*, and acted as such, when the Epistles directed to him were written,

the friends of prelacy can have no interest in contending that the latter bore a different character; for the same reasoning, in substance, applies to both.

But Dr. *Bowden* still contends, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were Diocesan Bishops, because they were empowered to *ordain* others to the work of the Gospel Ministry? Shall we never have done with this begging of the whole question, in a manner so unworthy of logicians and divines? Suppose they were empowered to ordain? What then? Do we not consider *Presbyters* as invested with this power? And is it not the great object of Dr. *Bowden*'s book to show that it was otherwise? Why, then, does he attempt to impose upon his readers by taking the main point for granted? Let him first prove that, in the primitive church, none were permitted to ordain, but an order of ministers superior to Presbyters, and then his argument from the fact of *Timothy* and *Titus* having been invested with the ordaining power, will be conclusive; but until he shall have established the former, which neither he, nor any other man, has done, or can do, the latter will be considered, by every discerning reader, as worse than trifling.

Dr. *Bowden* and his friends also lay great stress on another point. They take for granted that there had been *Elders* (or *Presbyters*) ordained by the apostle *Paul* himself, both at *Ephesus* and *Crete*, before *Timothy* and *Titus* were sent to those places. Assuming this as a fact, they say, these

Presbyters, on Presbyterian principles, must have been invested with the ordaining power; but if this were so, why were others sent on so long a journey, to perform that which persons on the spot could have done as well? Here, again, every thing is taken for granted. Where did Dr. B. learn that there had been Presbyters fixed, either in *Ephesus* or *Crete*, before *Timothy* or *Titus* went thither? The sacred history says no such thing. With what face, then, can any man undertake to found his whole argument on a mere assumption? It is certain that the Epistle to *Titus* contains a direction to *ordain Elders in every city*. There were, therefore, *some* cities, at least, which were not furnished with the requisite number, and probably with none at all. But admitting that there were Elders already ordained both at *Ephesus* and *Crete*, still the argument is good for nothing. That some portions of those churches were unfurnished with ministers of any kind, and that they were all in a comparatively unorganized and immature state, is perfectly manifest from the whole strain of the Apostle's language concerning them. Was it unnatural, on Presbyterian principles, that in this state of things, *special missionaries* should be sent among them; men well known as possessing the entire confidence of the Apostle; fully instructed in their duty; and qualified to travel from place to place, and *set in order the things which were wanting?* Might not many prudential considerations have rendered it expedient to send such

eminent characters from a distance, rather than to select men of less distinguished and commanding reputation on the spot, to perform a service as delicate as it was arduous? In fact, this is precisely the course which has been, more than once, pursued, in Presbyterian churches, when they were in an unsettled state, without any one ever dreaming that it infringed the doctrine of ministerial parity; or that it implied any deficiency of power in those ministers who resided nearer the scene of action.

But Dr. *Bowden* further contends, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were empowered to ordain *alone;* that is, that in the ordinations which they performed at *Ephesus* and *Crete*, there were no other ordainers joined with them; and hence he infers that the Presbyterian doctrine cannot be true, because our rules do not admit of ordination by a single Presbyter. Here, once more, this dextrous disputant takes for granted the very thing to be proved. Who informed him that *Timothy* was the *sole* ordainer at *Ephesus*, and *Titus* at *Crete?* The Epistles to those Evangelists do not say so. Is he *sure* that they had not travelling companions, of equal power with themselves, who united with them in every ordination? Can he determine for what purpose *Mark* travelled with *Timothy;* and *Zenas* and *Apollos* with *Titus?* Or can he undertake to say that these persons never joined in setting apart others to the ministry? Dr. B. is confident there had been Presbyters ordained, both at *Ephesus* and *Crete* before these *Evangelists* went thither.

Now, if there *were* such Presbyters in those churches, will he venture to assert, that one or more of these were not always joined with *Timothy* and *Titus* in ordaining other Presbyters*? In short, neither Dr. B. nor any other man, knows any thing about these matters; and yet he assumes facts, and argues upon them with as much confidence, as if he were perfectly acquainted with every minute particular.

This gentleman, however, still pleads, that directions about ordaining ministers, and regulating the affairs of the church, were given to *Timothy* and *Titus* alone; that we hear of no others joined with them in those instructions; and that we have no right to suppose there were such. This plea does not deserve an answer; but it shall have one. Suppose one of our Presbyteries or Synods

* Dr. *Bowden* appears to think it strange that I suggest the possibility that some of the Presbyters of *Ephesus* and *Crete* might have been united with *Timothy* and *Titus* in their ordaining acts; when I had before represented it as utterly uncertain whether there were such Presbyters in existence, and as rather probable that there were not. But there is no inconsistency here. I only mean to show that Dr. B. does not know whether there *were*, or *were not* such Presbyters; and that he can gain nothing by either supposition. If there were *none such* at *Ephesus* or *Crete*, before these Evangelists were sent, then a fundamental argument in favour of the prelatical character of *Timothy* and *Titus* is destroyed. If there *were* such, then they might have assisted, for aught we know, in every ordination: and then another boasted argument on the same side falls to the ground. Whichever supposition is adopted, it is equally fatal.

were to send out a company of two or three missionaries; and, for the sake of convenience, were to convey their instructions in the form of a Letter to the oldest and most prudent of the number; would this individual have reason to consider himself as a person of a superior *order*, on account of such a circumstance? Again, when we ordain a minister, the person who *presides* in the ordination generally recites to the newly admitted brother many passages from the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, seldom omitting, in particular, the injunction—*Lay hands suddenly on no man.* But no minister ever considered this mode of address, as constituting him the *sole* ordainer in any case in which he should afterwards act. It would be as reasonable to say, that, because the Apostle gave *Timothy* direction about public preaching, *therefore* HE alone was empowered to preach; or, because he was instructed with respect to some parts of public prayer*, *therefore* HE only was allowed

* By the way it is not a little remarkable that the Apostle should content himself with giving *Timothy* only *general directions* with respect to public prayer, and even these only with regard to *some* of the objects of petition. Where were the *Liturgies* of those times? Had *Forms of Prayer* been so indispensably necessary, or, at least, so *pre-eminently important*, as our Episcopal brethren, tell us they are, and always have been, why did not *Paul*, or some other of the Apostles, furnish the churches with *Liturgies* written by themselves, and under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost? How shall we account for it, that instead of sending *Timothy* a *Form*, he only laid down for him a few *general words*

to pray. But there would be no end to such absurdities. It is really wonderful that gentlemen who appear to be serious, should lay so much stress on arguments, much better calculated to pour ridicule on their cause, than to afford it efficient aid.

But, admitting that *Timothy* and *Titus* each acted as *sole* ordainers at *Ephesus* and *Crete*—the probability is, that they did not; but, supposing it proved that they *did*, it does not affect the question in dispute. Although Presbyterians, wishing to conform as perfectly as possible to Scriptural example, require a *plurality* of ministers to be present, and to lay on their hands in ordination; yet I have no reason to suppose that any Presbyterian minister or church, would consider an ordination performed, in a case of necessity, by a single Presbyter, as null and void. Supposing it proved, therefore, that an inspired Apostle, in a new and unsettled state of the church, sent forth Evangelists *singly* to preach, ordain, and organize churches, it would establish nothing, either way, material to the present controversy.

Every thing, therefore, that Dr. *Bowden* has advanced to establish the prelatical character of *Timothy* and *Titus*, is perfectly nugatory. It is all mere assumption, instead of proof; and were it

of direction? But this is not the only instance in which the Apostles appear to have been of a different mind from some modern churchmen.

not for the respectable character of the author, would be totally unworthy of reply. He has no where proved that these ministers went to *Ephesus* and *Crete* in a higher character than that of *itinerant Presbyters*. He has no where proved that they were the fixed *pastors* or *bishops* of the churches which he undertakes to assign to them. He has no where proved that there were Presbyters in those churches, before these Evangelists were sent thither, who might, on Presbyterian principles, have performed the rite of ordination, without the trouble and expense of sending special missionaries to so great a distance. He has no where proved that *Timothy* or *Titus* was, either of them, the *sole* ordainer in any case. He has no where, in short, established a single fact concerning either of them, which has the least appearance of prelatical superiority. Even if he *could* establish these facts, his point would not be gained. He would, after all, be obliged to show, that they took place in a *regular* and *established* and not in a *new* and *unsettled* state of the church; and that they were intended to serve, in every minute particular, as *precedents*. But he has not proved, and cannot prove, either the one or the other. I therefore repeat, with increased confidence, the closing sentence of the discussion of this subject in my former Letters. "The argu-
"ment which our Episcopal brethren derive from
"*Timothy* and *Titus* is absolutely worth nothing;
"and after all the changes that may be rung upon

" it, and all the decorations with which it may " be exhibited, it amounts only to a gratuitous as- " sumption of the whole point in dispute."

As to the testimony adduced from the *Fathers*, to establish the prelatical character of *Timothy* and *Titus*, it is more, much more, suited, in the view of all intelligent readers, to discredit than to aid the Episcopal cause. I had quoted from Dr. Whitby, an eminent Episcopal divine, the following passage.—" The great controversy concerning " this, and the Epistle to Timothy is, whether " *Timothy* and *Titus* were indeed made Bishops, " the one of *Ephesus*, and the pro-consular *Asia;* " the other of *Crete*. Now of this matter I con- " fess I can find nothing in any writer of the *first* " *three centuries*, nor *any intimation* that they " bore that name." Dr. *Bowden* virtually concurs in this statement of Dr. *Whitby;* for though he speaks with much confidence of the testimony of the *Fathers* on this point, yet the first authentic witness *, among the Fathers, whom he brings

* Dr. *Bowden* does, indeed, adduce one witness, whom he places *before* Eusebius, in the following words. " From a " fragment of a treatise by *Polycrates*, Bishop of *Ephesus*, " towards the close of the second century. This fragment " is preserved in *Photius's Bibliotheca*, and quoted by Arch- " bishop *Usher* in his discourse on Episcopacy. In that " fragment it is said, that " Timothy was ordained Bishop " of *Ephesus* by the great *Paul*." Nobody has ever seen the original work of *Polycrates;* but *Photius*, who was Patriarch of *Constantinople*, toward the close of the *ninth* century, has preserved, it seems, a fragment of it in his *Bibli-*

forward is *Eusebius*, who says, "it is related that "*Timothy* was the first bishop of *Ephesus*." Now *Eusebius* does indeed say so; but he also declares, generally, that his sources of information were exceedingly scanty and uncertain; and, in particular, he confesses, that it was not easy to say, who were left Bishops of the several churches, by the Apostles, except so far as might be gathered from the *Acts of the Apostles*, and the *Epistles of Paul*. *Eccles. Hist.* Lib. III. Cap. 4. Here, then, is the sum of the evidence from the *Fathers*, as to this point. *Eusebius* stands first on the list. He quotes as his authority, the *New Testament*. All the others, as *Ambrose*, *Epiphanius*, *Jerome*, *Chrysostom*, &c. follow *Eusebius*. The fathers, then, virtually confess that they knew no more of the matter than we do; and of course their whole testimony is, to us, perfectly worthless.

But some of the Fathers speak on this subject in a manner that is somewhat unfortunate for the Episcopal cause. On the one hand, several of them represent *Timothy* and *Titus*, and especially the former, as more than a single Bishop, as bearing the dignity of an *Archbishop*, or *Metropolitan*.

theca. This *Bibliotheca* has been seen, and is quoted, we are told, by Archbishop *Usher*, "in his Discourse on Epis-"copacy." But as Dr. B. has no *reference*, by means of which this fragment may be found, either in the "*Bibliotheca*," or in the "*Discourse*," I consider myself as absolved from all obligation to pay it the least attention. Did not Dr. B. promise to act in a more "scholar-like" manner?

Now, as Dr. *Bowden*, and his friends, acknowledge that there were no *Archbishops* in the Apostle's days, they must of course consider this testimony as false and worthless. On the other hand, one of the Fathers quoted by Dr. *Bowden*, (*Chrysostom*) in his *Commentary* on *Titus* I. 5. speaks of that Evangelist in the following clear and decisive terms: "*That thou mayest ordain Elders*, "says the Apostle: he means *Bishops*. *In every* "*city*, says he, for he would not have the *whole* "*Island* committed to *one man*; but that every "one should have and mind his own proper cure; "for so he knew the labour would be easier to "him, and the people to be governed would have "more care taken of them; since their teacher "would not run about to govern *many churches*; "but would attend to the ruling of *one* only, and "so would keep it in good order."

Here *Chrysostom* expressly declares, that *Titus* was not the Bishop of all *Crete*; that he was sent, not to take the fixed pastoral charge of the Island, but to place its churches under a permanent and regular ministry; that the Apostolic direction was to set a Bishop over every particular church: and that a single church was quite enough for a Scriptural Bishop to have under his care. In short, the whole passage is so entirely Presbyterian in its strain, that its force in our favour can be overlooked by none.

But one of the most extraordinary parts of Dr. *Bowden*'s work, is that in which he undertakes to

answer my argument drawn from the constitution of the *Jewish Synagogue* I had shown, in my second Letter, that the *Synagogue* worship universally prevailed among the Jews, at the time of our Lord's coming in the flesh; that the apostles, in organizing Christian Churches, willing to conform as far as possible, to the habits and prejudices of the first converts to Christianity, who were Jews, deviated as little as circumstances would admit from the synagogue model; that this model was Presbyterian in its form; and that the nature of the public service, the names and duties of church officers, the manner of ordination, &c. were all transferred from the *synagogue* to the *church*. It is not easy to exibit this argument in its native strong light before common readers, because few have any tolerable acquaintance with Jewish antiquities. But the more I reflect upon it, the more deeply I am persuaded, that, when properly stated and understood, it will be found an argument of the most conclusive and satisfactory kind.

Dr. *Bowden*, however, views it as wholly destitute of force. This, indeed, might be expected from a man, who, as we have lately seen, is hardy enough to dissent from a direct statement of the apostle *Paul*. But let us examine his objections and his reasonings.

In the first place, Dr. B. insists that the Christian Church could not have been organized after the model of the Jewish Synagogue, because the synagogue did not, properly speaking, partake of the

character of a church; being a mere *human institution*, and resting on no other basis than *human authority*. He asserts, that my not adverting to this fact, is the foundation of my whole error; and that the due consideration of it will completely destroy my argument. I trust, however, that a few remarks will be sufficient to show that the want of due consideration is on *his* part, and not on mine; and that the argument stands firm and unanswerable, notwithstanding all he has said.

When Dr. *Bowden* so confidently asserts that the synagouge was a *mere* human institution; that no Jew was under *any obligation* to attend upon its service; and that, being a mere creature of man, every one was at liberty, in the sight of God, to treat it as he pleased;—when he makes these assertions, he ought to know that he is speaking wholly without authority. Who told the learned professor all these things? If he can inform us *when* synagogues were instituted, by *whom*, and from *what source* the suggestion or command to establish them came, he will render a piece of service to ecclesiastical history, for which all its students will have reason to thank him: for, truly, no other person has ever yet been able with any degree of certainty to give us this information. But if he cannot give a decisive answer to any one of these questions, how could he dare to speak on the subject in the manner that he has ventured to do?—It is certain that *synagogues* are mentioned in the 78th *Psalm*, and that they

are there called *synagogues of God.* It is certain that putting an offender *out of the synagogue*, was a well known mode of speaking among the Jews, to express *excommunication from the church;* and it is equally certain, that our Lord and his apostles attended the synagogue service every sabbath day, and thus gave it their decided sanction. Now, all these taken together, look, to say the least, like something more than mere human contrivance. If, as some suppose, the synagogue was instituted by *Ezra*, after the Babylonish captivity, and none, that I know, ascribe to it a later, or less respectable origin, even this supposition will not aid Dr. *Bowden*, or countenance his reasoning. Was not *Ezra* an *inspired man?* And will not, of course, an institution of *his*, rest on substantially the same ground, as to authority, with an institution established or enjoined by *Peter* or *Paul?*

But granting to Dr. *Bowden* all that he asks; granting that the synagogue was a mere human institution; that it made no part of the Jewish church, properly so called; and that no Jew was under any divine obligation to attend on its service;—what does he gain by the concession? Nothing. It is so far from destroying my argument, that it does not affect or even touch it. Dr. B. does not deny that synagogues *existed*, and were *in use*, at the time in which the apostles were called upon to form their Jewish converts into Christian churches. *How* they came into use, or by *what authority* they were introduced, are

questions foreign from the present inquiry. Again, Dr. B. does not deny, that every particular synagogue had three classes of officers, a *bishop*, *elders*, and *deacons*; that the peculiar office of the *bishop*, (or as he was sometimes called, the *angel of the church*) was to *preside* in the public service, and *lead the devotions* of the people; that the principal duty of the bench of *elders*, was to assist in *ruling the synagogue*, and administering its *discipline**; and that the *deacons*, though sometimes called to the performance of other services, were particularly charged with collecting and distributing alms for the *poor*. Dr. B. does not deny, that *ordination* by the *imposition of hands* was always employed in constituting the synagogue ministry. And, finally, he does not deny, that reading the sacred scriptures, expounding them, and offering up public prayers, formed the ordinary service of the synagogue. He does not deny that *all* these were found in the *Synagogue*, and that *none* of them were found in the *Temple* service. This is conceding all that I desire, or that my argument demands. I care not what doubts may be started concerning the *date* or the *origin* of these institutions. All that I have to do with, are the great and indubitable *facts*, that they were *in use* among the Jews; and

* Dr. *Bowden* explicitly grants that there was a class of officers in every Jewish synagogue, similar to the *ruling elders* in the Presbyterian church. We shall hereafter see that this is an important concession.

that in organizing the Christian church, the Apostles, acting in the name, and under the authority of Christ, appointed for the Church the same *classes* of officers as existed in the synagogue; gave them the same *names;* assigned to them similar *duties;* directed their *ordination* to be solemnized in the same manner; and prescribed for them, substantially, the same course of public *service.* Can any thing be more conclusive? He who can reject this plain induction of facts, will find it difficult to be satisfied with demonstration itself.

You will now be able, my brethren, to judge between Dr. *Bowden* and me, with respect to this point; or rather between the Presbyterian and Episcopal doctrine. *We* say that the Christian church was formed by the apostles after the model of the Jewish Synagogue; while those who contend for the divine right of Diocesan Episcopacy, assert, that it was organized, after the model of the *Temple* service. We produce proof. We show that the organization and service of the Christian church, resemble the Temple in *scarcely any thing;* while they resemble the Synagogue in almost *every thing.* We show that there were *bishops*, *elders*, and *deacons* in the synagogue; but not in the temple:—That there was *ordination* by the *imposition of hands* in the synagogue, but no ordination at all in the temple:—That there were reading the scriptures, expounding them, and public prayers, *every sabbath day*, in the synagogue;

while the body of the people * went up to the temple only *three times a year*, and even then to attend on a very different service:—That in the synagogue, there was a system established, which included a weekly provision not only for the instruction and devotions of the people, but also for the maintenance of discipline, and the care of the poor; while scarcely any thing of this kind was to be found in the temple. Now, in all these respects, and in many more which might be mentioned, the Christain church followed the Synagogue, and departed from the Temple. Could we trace a resemblance in *one* or a *few* points, it might be considered as accidental; but the resemblance is so close, so striking, and extends to so many particulars, as to arrest the attention of the most careless inquirer. It was, indeed, notoriously so great in the early ages, that the heathen frequently suspected and charged Christian churches, with being Jewish synagogues in disguise. But with respect to the *Temple* service, this resemblance is, in almost every particular, entirely wanting. I ask, then, after which of these models was the Christian church formed? The answer is so plain, that I should insult your

* Only the *males*, it will be observed, were required to go up to *Jerusalem*, three times a year. If, therefore, Dr. *Bowden*'s position, that the synagogue service was a mere human invention, be admitted, then it will follow, that there was no public religious service of divine institution in which the Jewish *females* could *ever* join! Is this probable?

understandings by supposing it possible for you to doubt.

It is vain to object as Dr. *Bowden* does, that the resemblance between the Christain church and the synagogue is not absolutely *perfect* as to *every minute particular*. This does not affect the general principle. He objects, for instance, that neither *Baptism* nor the *Lord's Supper* is to be found in the synagogue service. Be it so. But were they to be found in the *Temple service*, for the resemblance of which to the Christian church, he so ardently contends? No. *Baptism*, among the Jews had no connexion with the Temple; and with respect to the *Passover*, it was instituted long before the temple had a being; and has been continued near eighteen hundred years since it was no more.

But Dr. *Bowden* is incorrect in his *premises*, as well as in his *conclusion*. Both *Baptism* and the *Passover*, though they had no connexion with the Temple, *were* connected with the Synagogue. The ministers of the Synagogue admitted Proselytes to their communion by baptising parents and children. To constitute a regular Jewish baptism, it was necessary that three *Elders* of the Synagogue should be present. The Synagogue officers also determined the question of right who should eat the Passover. In fact, the Synagogue officers did admit Proselytes into the Jewish Church, and excommunicate offenders. They had the care of the whole discipline from the time of *Ezra*. The

priests, it is true, had a voice; but it was as members of the *Sanhedrim*, and not as officers of the *Temple*.

As to Dr. B.'s objection, that the organization of the Christian church cannot resemble that of the synagogue, because the *bishop* of the synagogue had only the charge of *a single congregation*, whereas he is persuaded, that the *Christian Bishop* has a charge extending over many congregations—I can only say, that while it includes a most ludicrous begging of the question in debate, it carries with it also a most important concession, which I take for granted the Dr. was not aware of; but which is fatal to his cause.—He grants that the *bishop* of the synagogue, (and of course, the only kind of *bishop* to which the first converts to Christianity had been accustomed,) was the pastor, or presiding officer, over a *single congregation*. Now if the model of the synagogue, and not of the temple, was adopted by the apostles, it affords a strong presumption that the scriptural bishop was, what we suppose him to have been, the pastor of a single church. In fact, Dr. B. fully concedes this: for, in another part of his work, he frankly acknowledges that, in the days of the apostles, the title of *bishop* was currently applied to the pastors of particular churches. There is nothing now wanting, even on Dr. B.'s own principles, to render the resemblance between the synagogue and the church *complete*, so far as the *officers* of each are concerned, but to find *ruling*

elders in the primitive church. But a bench of *ruling elders*, corresponding with those who bear that name in our church, he acknowledges belonged to the Synagogue; and in the next Letter I hope to prove, to the satisfaction of every impartial mind, that such officers were instituted in the primitive Church.

The great principle for which I am contending, viz. that the Christian Church was organized on the model of the Synagogue, has been received and maintained by a number of the ablest divines that ever wrote on the subject, both *Presbyterian* and *Episcopal*. But all testimonies adduced from the former will be viewed, by Dr. *Bowden* and his friends, with a suspicious eye. I shall, therefore, pass by all that has been said on this subject, by the incomparably learned and able Professor *Vitringa*, of *Holland*, and by that prodigy of erudition, the celebrated *Selden*, of *England*—because they were Presbyterians *. But I hope my opponents, in this controversy will pay some respect to the following quotations from some of the most respectable writers in their own church, who concede all that I ask or desire.

The first quotation shall be taken from Bishop *Burnet*. "Among the Jews, (says he) he who

* I call *Selden* a *Presbyterian*, because, though not a thorough advocate for Presbyterianism, *strictly* so called, he was decidedly anti-episcopal.

"was the chief of the *Synagogue*, was called "*Chazan Hakeneseth*, i. e. *the Bishop of the* "*Congregation*, and *Sheliach Tsibbor*, *the Angel* "*of the Church*. And the Christian Church be- "ing modelled as near the form of the Syna- "gogue as they could be; as they retained many "of the rites, so *the form of the government was* "*continued*, and *the names remained the same*." And again, "In the Synagogues there was, first, "one who was called *the Bishop of the Congrega-* "*tion*; next the three orderers and judges of eve- "ry thing about the Synagogue; who were called "*Tsekenim*, and by the Greeks πρεσβυτεροι, or "γερονται, that is, *Elders*. These ordered and "determined every thing that concerned the Sy- "nagogue, or the persons in it. Next them were "the three *Parnassin* or *Deacons*, whose charge "was to gather the collections of the rich, and "distribute them to the poor *."

The next quotation shall be taken from Dr. *Lightfoot*, another Episcopal Divine, not less distinguished for his learning and talents. "The "Apostle," (says he) "calleth the minister, *Epis-* "*copus*, (or *Bishop*) from the common and known "title of the *Chazan* or *Overseer* in the *Syna-* "*gogue*." And again, "Besides these, there "was the public minister of the Synagogue, who "prayed publicly, and took care about reading "the law, and sometimes preached, if there were

* *Observations* on the 1. *Can.* p. 2. and 11. *Can.* p. 86.

" not some other to discharge this office. This " person was called *Sheliach Tsibbor*, the *Angel* " *of the Church*, and *Chazan Hakeneseth* the *Cha-* " *zan* or *Bishop of the Congregation.* The *Aruch* " gives the reason of the name. The *Chazan*, " says he, is *Sheliach Tsibbor*, the *Angel of the* " *Church*, (or the public minister,) and the Tar- " gum renders the word *Roveh* by the word " *Hose*, one that *oversees.* For it is incumbent " on him to oversee how the reader reads, and " whom he may call out to read in the law. The " public minister of the Synagogue himself read " not the law publicly, but every Sabbath he called " out seven of the Synagogue (on other days " fewer) whom he judged fit to read. He stood " by him that read, with great care observing that " he read nothing either falsely or improperly, " and calling him back, and correcting him, if " he had failed in any thing. And hence he was " called *Chazan*, that is Επισκοπος, i. e. *Bishop* or " *Overseer.* Certainly the signification of the " word *Bishop*, and *Angel of the Church*, had " been determined with less noise, if recourse " had been had to the proper fountains, and men " had not vainly disputed about the signification " of words taken I know not whence. The ser- " vice and worship of the Temple being abolish- " ed, as being ceremonial, God transplanted the " worship and public adoration of God used in " the Synagogues, which was moral, into the " Christian Church; viz. the public ministry,

" public prayers, reading God's word, and preach-
" ing, &c. Hence the names of the ministers of
" the Gospel were the very same, the *Angel of*
" *the Church*, the *Bishop* which belonged to the
" Ministers in the *Synagogues*. There were also
" three *Deacons*, or *Almoners*, on whom was the
" *care of the poor* *."

The celebrated *Grotius* †, whose great learning and talents will be considered by all as giving much weight to his opinion on any subject, is full and decided in maintaining that the primitive church was formed after the model of the *Synagogue*. Many passages might be quoted from his writings, in which this opinion is directly asserted. The following may suffice. In his Commentary on *Acts* xi. 30. he expresses himself thus: " The
" whole polity *(regimen)* of the Christian Church
" was conformed to the pattern of the *Synagogue*."
And in his Commentary on 1. *Tim.* v. 17. he has the following passage. " Formerly, in large ci-
" ties, as there were many Synagogues, so there
" were also many churches, or separate meetings
" of Christians. And every particular Church
" had its own President, or Bishop, who instruct-

* See *Lightfoot's* Works, Vol. i. p. 308. and ii. p. 133.

† Though *Grotius* was bred a Presbyterian; yet being soured by what he considered as ill treatment from the Church of *Holland*, he discovered a strong predilection for Episcopacy. When this is considered, the declarations above cited, carry with them peculiar force.

"ed the people, and ordained Presbyters. In "*Alexandria* ALONE it was the custom to have but "one President or Bishop, for the whole city, who "distributed Presbyters through the city for the "purpose of instructing the people; as we are "taught by *Sozomen.* I. 14."

The next point in Dr. *Bowden*'s exhibition of Scriptural testimony, which demands attention, is the alleged Episcopal character of *James* over the church of *Jerusalem.*—This argument in favour of Prelacy, was wholly omitted in my former volume, not because there was any difficulty in answering it, but because it really appeared to me too frivolous to be seriously considered. Dr. *Bowden*, however, having no arguments to spare, has brought it forward with much confidence, and seems to consider it, like every other on the Episcopal side, as *perfectly conclusive.* Indeed he appears to regard me as guilty of injustice to the Episcopal cause in passing it over in silence.

But how does it appear, from the New Testament, that *James* was Bishop of *Jerusalem?* From such considerations, the advocates of prelacy tell us, as the following: 1. That in the Synod at *Jerusalem*, (*Acts* xv.) he *spoke last*, and expressed himself thus—*Wherefore my sentence is*, &c. 2. That *Peter*, after his release from prison, said to certain persons—*Go show these things unto James and to the brethren. Acts* xii. 17. And 3. That, in Acts xxi. 17, 18. it is said—*And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.*

And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the Elders were present. On these passages Dr. *Bowden* asks, "Why did *Peter* direct certain things to be communicated particularly to *James*, if he were not the *Bishop?* What induced *Paul* and his company to go in unto *James* in particular; and how came all the Elders to be with *James*, unless he were the Bishop? On the supposition that he bore this character every thing is natural; but on any other supposition these facts must appear very strange. I see enough to convince me that he was the head of all the Presbyters and Congregations in *Jerusalem*. For I find him constantly *distinguished* from his clergy. He is always mentioned *first*, and the name of no other Presbyter, however eminent he may have been, is ever given. He is mentioned with *marked respect* on various occasions," &c. &c. I. 345—352.

This argument, when stripped of all its decorations, stands simply thus—*James* was the *last* person who spoke in the Synod; *therefore* he was superior to all the Apostles and others present! *Peter* requested an account of his release from prison to be sent to *James; therefore James* was a *Diocesan Bishop!* Paul and his company went to the house of *James* in *Jerusalem*, and there found the Elders convened; *therefore James* was their ecclesiastical Governor!

Now, in the name of common sense, what connexion is there in this case, between the premises and the conclusion? Are no clergymen ever treated

with "pointed respect," unless they are *Diocesan Bishops?* Do no clerical meetings ever take place in the houses of any other class of ministers than *Diocesan Bishops?* Cannot messages of a public nature be sent to individual ministers of the Gospel, without supposing them to be *Prelates?* Suppose a number of Presbyterian ministers had an important communication to make to the Clergy of a certain city, would it be inconsistent with their doctrine of parity to address this communication to a particular individual, most distinguished for his age, talents, piety, and influence, to be by him imparted to the rest of his brethren? Nay, is not this, in all Presbyterian, as well as other countries, the ordinary method of proceeding? When the clergy of any town or district convene for mutual consultation, does their assembling in the house of some aged and venerable brother in the ministry constitute that brother their *Bishop*, in the Episcopal sense of the word? To propose questions of this kind *seriously* is little short of an insult to the understanding of the reader. Do not facts of the very kind related of *James*, happen every day to Presbyterian ministers? When gentlemen who would be thought to *argue*, and not to *trifle*, condescend to amuse their readers with representations of this kind, under the garb of *reasoning*, it is really difficult to answer them in the language of respect or gravity.

But the *Fathers*, it seems, assert that *James* was Bishop of *Jerusalem*. Admitting this fact;

and admitting, also, that there were no circumstances tending to invalidate their testimony; to what does it amount? Why, simply, that *James* was *one* of the Clergy, perhaps the *Senior* Clergyman of the Church of *Jerusalem*, and probably the most conspicuous and eminent of them all. For let it never be forgotten that our Episcopal brethren themselves acknowledge, that the title of *Bishop* was applied in the Apostles' days, and for some time afterwards, to the Pastors of single congregations, and of course that this term alone decides nothing in their favour. But let us sift this matter a little. *Hegesippus* is quoted by *Eusebius* as relating, that "*James*, the brother of our Lord, undertook, together with the Apostles, the government of the Church of *Jerusalem**." This is the earliest writer that is brought to testify directly on the subject; and he declares that *James* presided over the Church in *Jerusalem in conjunction with the other Apostles*. He says, indeed, a little before, that the Bishoprick of *Jerusalem* was given to *James* by the Apostles, but when we come to compare the two passages, and to interpret the one by the other, the whole testimony of this writer will be found perfectly equivocal. Some of the later Fathers, also, following *Hegesippus*, speak of *James* as Bishop of *Jerusalem*; but do they tell us in what *sense* they employ this title? That the apostles and primitive christians sometimes employed it in a sense

* *Eccles. Hist.* Lib. II. Cap. 23.

different from that which is adopted by our Episcopal brethren, is confessed on all hands. And that these early writers, when they speak of *James* as Bishop of *Jerusalem*, mean to say that he was a *Prelate*, a Bishop, in the modern and perverted sense of the term, is what we confidently call in question, and what Dr. *Bowden*, with all his brethren to aid him, cannot prove. I know that the learned Professor loses all patience at intimations of this kind; but it is by no means the first time that a man has been provoked by a demand of *proof*, when he had nothing but *assertion* to produce.

But the most wonderful part of the story is, that Dr. *Bowden* produces *Calvin* as a witness in support of the Episcopal dignity of *James*. On this point he speaks in the following terms: "So evident is it, that *James* was Bishop of *Jerusalem*, that even *Calvin* thinks it highly probable that he was Governor of that Church. 'When, says *Calvin*, the question is concerning dignity, it is wonderful *James* should be preferred before *Peter*. Perhaps it was because he was *Prefect* of the Church of Jerusalem.' *In Gal.* c. II. v. 9. *Calvin* did not choose to speak plainer; for that would have been in direct contravention to his ecclesiastical regimen." I. p. 346.

The moment I cast my eye on this quotation from *Calvin*, I took for granted that something had been kept back, which, if produced, would turn the tables on the Professor. And this accor-

dingly proves to be the case. The passage, as it really stands in *Calvin*, is as follows. "The Apostle speaks of their (*James*, *Cephas*, and *John*,) "*seeming to be pillars*, not by way of contempt, but "he repeats a common sentiment. "Because from "this it follows, that what they did, ought not to "be lightly rejected. When the question is concerning dignity, it is wonderful that *James* "should be preferred to *Peter*. Perhaps this was "done because he was *President* of the Church of "*Jerusalem*. With respect to the word *pillar*, "we know, that, in the very nature of things, "those who excel others in talents, in prudence, or "in other endowments, must also be superior in "authority. In the Church of God it is a fact, "that in proportion as any one is strong in grace "in the same proportion is honour due to him. "It is ingratitude, nay, it is impiety, not to do "homage to the Spirit of God wherever he appears in his gifts. And further, as the people "of a Church cannot do without a pastor, so "each particular assembly of pastors stands in "need of some one to be *moderator*. But let it "be always understood, that he who is first of all "should be as a servant, according to *Matthew* "23. 11."

Where is the testimony from *Calvin* now? And, I will add, where are Dr. *Bowden*'s blushes? The truth is, the whole passage, like the tenour of all *Calvin*'s writings, is decidedly anti-prelatical. That great Reformer, as will be more fully seen here-

after, believed in no authority of one minister over another, as having existed in the primitive church, but a *moderatorship*, either occasional or standing, for the maintenance of order.

This is not the only instance in which Dr. *Bowden* entirely perverts the language of *Calvin*, and represents him as delivering opinions *directly opposite* to those which he really does deliver. Of this, more in a future letter, in which the writings of *Calvin*, so far as they relate to Episcopacy, will be particularly considered. In the mean time I cannot forbear to notice a single specimen, so gross and remarkable, that I could scarcely credit the testimony of my own senses when I found it advanced by both my opponents, not only with confidence, but even with sarcastic and reproachful exultation, as a great concession from the reformer of *Geneva* in their favour.

In his Commentary on *Titus* i. 5. *Calvin* speaks largely of the mission of that Evangelist to the Churches of *Crete*. Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* wish to persuade their readers, that, in these remarks, he fairly gives up the point that *Titus* was a Diocesan Bishop, or Prelate. Accordingly they both represent him as saying—"Hence we learn "that there was not any equality among the mi- "nisters of the Church, but that one was placed "over the rest in authority and counsel." On this pretended quotation from *Calvin*, Mr. *How* observes, "Here the divine institution of superior "and inferior grades of ministers, is asserted in

" unqualified terms." p. 63. Dr. *Bowden* quotes the passage from *Calvin*, exactly in the same manner, and makes precisely the same use of it with Mr. *How*.

You will, no doubt, be filled with astonishment, my brethren, to find that the passage from which these gentlemen profess to make this quotation, is *in fact* as follows: " *Presbyters*, or *Elders*, it is well " known, are not so denominated on account of " their *age*, since *young* men are sometimes cho- " sen to this office, as for instance, *Timothy;* but " it has ever been customary, in all languages, to " apply this title, as a term of honour, to all " Rulers. And, as we gather from the first Epis- " tle to *Timothy*, that there were *two kinds* of El- " ders; so *here* the context shows that no other " than *teaching Elders* are to be understood; that " is, those who were ordained to *teach;* because " the same persons are presently called *Bishops*. " It may be objected that too much power seems " to be given to *Titus*, when the Apostle com- " mands him to appoint ministers over all the " Churches. This, it may be said, is little less " than kingly power; for, on this plan, the right " of choice is taken away from the particular " Churches, and the right of judging in the case " from the *College of Pastors;* and this would " be to profane the whole of the sacred discipline " of the Church. But the answer is easy. Every " thing was *not* intrusted to the will of *Titus* as an " *individual*, nor was he allowed to impose such

" Bishops on the Churches, as he pleased: but he " was commanded to *preside* in the elections as " *Moderator*, as it is necessary for some one to do. " This is a mode of speaking exceedingly com- " mon. Thus a *Consul*, or *Regent*, or *Dictator*, " is said to create Consuls, because he convenes " assemblies for the purpose of making choice of " them. So also *Luke* uses the same mode of " speaking concerning *Paul* and *Barnabas* in the " *Acts of the Apostles*; not that they *alone* autho- " ritatively appointed Pastors over the Churches, " without their being tried or approved; but they " ordained suitable men, who had been elected or " chosen by the people. We learn also from this " place, that there was not then *such* an equality " among the ministers of the Church, but that " some one *might preside* in authority and counsel. " This, however, was nothing like the tyrannical " and unscriptural Prelacy which reigns in the " Papacy *. The plan of the Apostles was ex- " tremely different."

Here is not only a passage taken out of its connexion, and interpreted in a sense diametrically opposite to the whole scope and strain of the writer; but, what is much worse, the passage itself is *mistranslated*, and made to speak a language essentially different from the original. Mr. *How* may possibly plead that he never saw the original; that

* Here *Calvin* not only represents *Prelacy* as a *tyrannical* and *unscriptural* system, but evidently considers it as a part *of the corruptions* of *Popery*.

he quoted entirely on the authority of some other person. But Dr. *Bowden* cannot make the same plea. He inserts in the margin the very words which he mistranslates and perverts! What are we to think of such a fact? Is Dr. B. unable to translate a plain piece of Latin? or did he design to deceive? He may choose which alternative he pleases.

Dr. *Bowden* thinks me inconsistent with myself in demanding *decided Scriptural warrant*, and in maintaining the *sufficiency of Scripture* to direct us on the subject of ecclesiastical order; while, at the same time, I acknowledge that there are no *formal* or *explicit decisions* delivered on this subject, either by Christ or his Apostles. But where is the inconsistency here? Do I not maintain that, although the Scriptures present no formal or explicit decisions on this subject, yet we find in the New Testament, "a mode of *expression*, and a "number of *facts*, from which we may, without "difficulty, ascertain the outlines of the Apostolic "plan of Church order?" And is not this "Scrip-"tural warrant?" Is it not "*decided*" Scriptural warrant, in the estimation of all those who consider the form of the Apostolic Church as a *model* intended for our imitation? This is perfectly clear to every impartial mind: with others it is vain to reason.

With respect to Dr. *Bowden*'s open declaration, that the Scriptures, taken alone, are *not* a sufficient guide on this subject; that we cannot

" stir a step," in the controversy, to any purpose, without the aid of the Fathers; and even that we cannot establish the genuineness and authenticity of the Scriptures themselves, without the writings of the Fathers—I can only say that I consider it as a declaration equally unworthy of his character as a Divine, and as a Christian. Has Dr. *Bowden* no evidence that the Scriptures are from God, but what the *Fathers* say? Then he is exceedingly to be pitied; for his hope rests upon a most precarious foundation. I bless God that much better judges have been of a different opinion. I bless God that the greatest ornaments of his own Church, from *Cranmer*, *Latimer*, and *Ridley*, to the present day, have considered the *internal* evidence of the Scriptures as the *strongest*, the *best*, and most *precious* of all. The testimony of the Fathers, indeed, has its use; but to place it in the point of light in which Dr. *Bowden* does, and to lay so much stress upon it as he avows a disposition to do, is really extraordinary conduct for a Protestant minister of the Gospel!

The doctrine of our *Confession of Faith* is full and explicit on this subject. " We may be mov-
" ed and induced by the testimony of the Church,
" to an high and reverend esteem for the Holy
" Scripture: And the heavenliness of the *matter*,
" the efficacy of the *doctrine*, the majesty of the
" *style*, the *consent* of all the parts, the *scope* of
" the whole, the full *discovery* it makes of the
" only way of man's salvation, the many other in-

"comparable *excellencies*, and the entire *perfection* "thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abun- "dantly evidence itself to be the word of God. "Yet, notwithstanding, our full persuasion and as- "surance of the infallible truth, and divine autho- "rity thereof, is from the inward work of the Ho- "ly Spirit, bearing witness, by and with the word "in our hearts.—The whole counsel of God con- "cerning all things necessary for his own glory, "man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly "set down in Scripture, or, by good and necessa- "ry consequence, may be deduced from Scrip- "ture; unto which nothing, at any time, is to be "added, whether by new revelations, or by the "spirit and traditions of men." Chap. I. This is the doctrine of all the Reformed Churches. The doctrine of the latter clause, is explicitly recognised in the VIth article of Dr. *Bowden*'s own Church, which, in my opinion, he misunderstands and perverts. "Holy Scripture containeth all "things necessary to salvation: so that whatso- "ever is not read therein, nor may be proved "thereby, is not to be required of any man, that "it should be believed as an article of the Faith, "or be thought requisite or necessary to Salva- "tion." This is the rock on which we stand. As long as we can show, and while the Bible lasts I am sure we shall always be able to show, that Presbyterian government was the Apostolic model of Church order, we may stand unmoved at all opposite testimony, however plausible in its nature, and however confidently adduced.

LETTER IV.

Testimony in favour of the office of Ruling Elder.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IN several passages in my former Letters, I adverted to the office of *Ruling Elder*, and offered some considerations to show that it was instituted in the primitive Church. Dr. *Bowden*, perceiving that this position, if maintained, would prove fatal to his cause, has endeavoured, with all his force, to drive me from it, and to persuade his readers, that no such officer was known in the Christian Church until modern times. As this will hereafter appear to be a question of great importance, not only on account of the office itself, but also on account of its close connexion with the doctrine of ministerial parity, I hope you will pardon me for discussing it more carefully, and at greater length than I was able to do in my former volume.

There is, independent of all historical testimony, strong presumptive evidence that such an office must have been instituted by the Apostles. There is a *demand*, little short of absolute *necessity*, that one or more persons, under some name, to perform the duties of *Ruling Elders*, should be appointed in every well ordered Congregation. The Minis-

ter, whether he be called Pastor, Bishop, Rector, or by whatever title, cannot individually perform all the duties which are included in maintaining government and discipline in the Church, as well as ministering in the word and sacraments. He cannot be every where, or know every thing. He must have a number of grave, judicious, and pious persons, who shall assist him with information and counsel; whose *official* duty it shall be to aid him in overseeing, regulating, and edifying the Church. We can hardly have a better comment on these remarks, than the practice of those Churches which reject *Ruling Elders*. Our *Episcopal* brethren reject them; but they are obliged to have their *Vestrymen* and *Church-Wardens*, who perform the duties belonging to such Elders. Our *independent* brethren also reject this class of Church Officers; but they too are forced to resort to a *Committee*, who attend to the numberless details of parochial duty, which the Ministers cannot perform. They can scarcely take a single step without having in *fact*, though not in *name*, precisely such officers as we recognize under the Scriptural appellation of *Elders*. Now, is it probable, is it credible, that the Apostles, acting under the inspiration of Christ, the King and Head of the Church, should entirely overlook this necessity, and make no provision for it? It is not credible. We must, then, either suppose that some such officers as those in question were appointed by the Apostles, or that means, acknowledged by the

practice of all, to be indispensable in conducting the affairs of the Church, were forgotten or neglected.

Again; Dr. *Bowden* acknowledges, and with perfect correctness, that there were such officers in the *Jewish Synagogue*. "The *Elders*," says he, "of the Jewish Synagogue corresponded with "the *Lay-Elders* of your (the Presbyterian) "Church." *Letters*, Vol. I. 330. But if the Christian Church was organized after the model of the Synagogue, a fact of which there is the fullest evidence, then we may presume that similar Elders were included in this organization. This class of officers, so familiar to every Jew, and so indispensable in his eyes to the maintenance of ecclesiastical government and order, would, by no means, be likely to be left out, when every other was notoriously retained.

But we have better evidence. The New Testament makes express mention of such Elders. There is undoubtedly a reference to them in 1 *Timothy*, v. 17. *Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.* Every man of plain good sense, who had never heard of any controversy on the subject, would conclude, on reading this passage, that, when it was written, there were *two kinds* of Elders, *one* whose duty it was to *labour in the word and doctrine*, and *another* who did not thus labour, but only *ruled* in the Church; the Apostle says, *Elders that rule well*, are *worthy*

of double honour, but ESPECIALLY those who *labour in the word and doctrine*. Now if we suppose that there was only *one kind* of Elders then in the Church, and that they were *all teachers* or *labourers in the word*, we must make the inspired writer speak a language utterly unworthy of his character. There was, therefore, a class of Elders in the Apostolic Church, who did not preach, nor administer sacraments, but assisted in *government*. These, by whatever name they may be called, were precisely the same with those officers which we denominate *Ruling Elders*.

For this construction of the passage, Dr. *Whitaker*, a zealous and learned Episcopal Divine, and Professor of Divinity in the University of *Cambridge*, zealously contends. And though his declaration on the subject was quoted in my former Letters, I cannot help repeating it here. "By "these words," says he, "the Apostle evidently "distinguishes between the Bishops and the *In-* "*spectors* of the Church. If all who rule well "be worthy of double honour, especially they "who labour in the word and doctrine, it is plain "there were some who did not so labour; for if "all had been of this description, the meaning "would have been absurd; but the word *especially* "points out a difference. If I should say, that "all who study well at the university are worthy "of double honour, *especially they who labour in* "*the study of theology*, I must either mean that "*all* do not apply themselves to *the study of theo-*

" *logy*, or I should speak nonsense. Wherefore " I confess that to be the most genuine sense by " which pastors and teachers are distinguished " from those who only governed."—*Prælect. ap. Didioclav. p.* 681. Equally to our purpose is the opinion of that acute and learned Episcopal Divine, Dr. *Whitby*, in his note on this passage, which was also in part before quoted. " The " Elders of the Jews," says he, " were of two " sorts; 1st. Such as *governed* in the Synagogue; " and 2dly. Such as ministered in *reading* and " *expounding* their Scriptures and traditions, and " from them pronouncing what did bind or loose, " or what was forbidden, and what was lawful to " be done. For when, partly by their captivity, " and partly through increase and traffick, they " were dispersed in considerable bodies through " divers regions of the world, it was necessary " that they should have *governors* or *magistrates*, " to keep them in their duty, and judge of crimi- " nal causes; and also *Rabbins* to teach them the " law, and the traditions of their fathers. The " *first* were ordained *ad judicandum*, *sed non ad* " *docendum de licitis et vetitis*, i. e. to judge, and " govern, but not to teach: The *second*, *ad docen-* " *dum*, *sed non ad judicandum*, i. e. to teach but " not to judge or govern. And these the Apos- " tle here declares to be the most honourable " and worthy of the chiefest reward. Accor- " dingly, the Apostle, reckoning up the offices

" God had appointed in the Church, places *teach-*
" *ers* before *governments.* 1 Corin. XII. 28."

I am aware that several glosses have been adopted to set aside the testimony of this text in favour of Ruling Elders. To enumerate and expose them would be a waste of time and patience. It is sufficient to say, that none of them possess any real force, and scarcely any of them even plausibility. And you will hereafter find, that, notwithstanding all these glosses, the text in question has been considered as conclusive in support of our doctrine, by some of the best judges, and by the great body of orthodox Christians, from the Apostles to the present day.

The next passage of Scripture which affords a warrant for the office of Ruling Elder is to be found in *Romans* XII. 6. 7. 8. *Having then gifts, differing according to the grace given to us; whether prophesy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on an exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity;* HE THAT RULETH, *with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.* With this passage may be connected another, of similar character, and to be interpreted on the same principles. I mean the following from 1 *Corinthians* XII. 28. *God hath set some in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps,* GOVERNMENTS, *diversities of tongues.*

In both these passages, there is a reference to the different offices and gifts bestowed on the Church, by her divine King and Head; in both of them there is a plain designation of an office for *ruling* or *government*, distinct from that of *teaching*; and in both, also, this office evidently has a place assigned to it *below* that of *Pastors* and *Teachers*. This office, by whatever name it may be called, and however its character may be disguised by ingenuity, is, to all intents and purposes, the same with that which Presbyterians distinguish by the title of *Ruling Elder*.

Let us now proceed to inquire what the *Fathers* say concerning this class of Church officers. And here, for the sake of presenting a connected view of the argument, I shall incorporate a portion of the evidence adduced in my former Letters, with such further testimonies as I find to my purpose.

In the *Gesta Purgationis Cæciliani et Felicis* *, we meet with the following enumeration of Church Officers, *Presbyteri, Diacones et Seniores*, i. e. "The Presbyters, the Deacons and Elders." And a little after it is added—"*Adhibite con-*" *clericos et seniores plebis, ecclesiasticos viros, et* "*inquirant diligenter quæ sint istæ dissentiones*," i. e. "call the fellow-clergymen, and *Elders* of "the people, *ecclesiastical men*, and let them "inquire diligently what are these dissentions." In that assembly, likewise, several letters were pro-

* See these *Gesta*, &c. preserved at the end of *Optatus*, by *Albaspinæus*, his Commentator.

duced and read; one addressed *Clero et Senioribus*, i. e. "to the Clergyman and the Elders;" and another, *Clericis et Senioribus*. i. e. "to the Clergymen and the Elders." Now I ask, what can this language mean? Here is a class of men, expressly called *ecclesiastical men*, or *Church Officers*, who are styled *Elders*, and yet distinguished from the CLERGY, with whom, at the same time, they meet, and officially transact business. If these be not the *Elders* of whom we are in search, we may give up all the rules of evidence.

Cyprian, in his 29th Epistle, directed "To his "brethren, the Presbyters and Deacons," expresses himself in the following terms:

"You are to take notice that I have ordained "*Saturus* a *reader*, and the confessor *Optatus*, a "*Subdeacon;* whom we had all before agreed to "place in the rank and degree next to that of the "clergy. Upon *Easter* day, we made one or two "trials of *Saturus*, in reading, when we were ap- "proving our *readers* before the *teaching Presby-* "*ters;* and then appointed *Optatus* from among "the *readers*, to be a *teacher* of the hearers." On this passage the Rev. Mr. *Marshall*, the Episcopal Translator and Commentator of *Cyprian*, remarks —"It is hence, I think, apparent, that all Presby- "ters were not *teachers*, but *assisted the Bishop* in "*other parts* of his office." And Bishop *Fell*, another Editor and Commentator on *Cyprian*, remarks on the same passage in the following words: "Inter Presbyteros *rectores* et *doctores* olim dis-

" tinxisse videtur divus *Paulus*, 1 *Tim.* v. 17." i. e. " St. *Paul* appears to have made a distinc- " tion, in acient times, between *Teaching* and *Ru-* " *ling Elders*, in 1 *Timothy* v. 17." Here two learned Episcopal Divines explicitly acknowledge the distinction between *Teaching* and *Ruling Elders*, in the Primitive Church; and one of them, an eminent Bishop, not only allows that *Cyprian* referred to this distinction, but also quotes as an authority for it, the principal text which Presbyterians adduce for the same purpose.

Hilary (frequently called *Ambrose)* who lived in the 4th century, in his explication of 1 *Timothy* v. 1. has the following passage—" For, indeed, " among all nations old age is honourable. Hence " it is that the *Synagogue*, and afterwards the " *Church*, had *Elders*, without whose counsel " nothing was done in the Church; which by " what negligence it *grew into disuse* I know not, " unless, perhaps, by the *sloth*, or rather by the " *pride* of the *Teachers*, while they alone wished " to appear something." It is scarcely credible to what a miserable expedient Dr. *Bowden* resorts to set aside the force of this testimony. He insists upon it that the pious Father only meant to say, that " in former times the *elderly men* of the " Church used to be consulted, which custom is " now laid aside." And again—" He says nothing " more than that it was formerly customary to " consult the *aged;* no doubt in difficult situations

" of the Church, which frequently occurred in " the first three centuries, while persecution last- " ed." It is difficult to answer suggestions of this kind in grave or respectful language. Can any man in his senses believe that *Hilary* only designed to inform his readers that in the Jewish Synagogues there were persons who had attained a considerable *age;* that this is also the case in the Christian Church; and that, in difficult cases, these aged persons were consulted? This would have been a sage remark indeed! Was there ever a community, ecclesiastical or civil, which did not include some *aged persons?* Or was there ever a state of society, or an age of the world, in which the practice of consulting the *aged* had *fallen into disuse?* I am really ashamed of such an attempt, on the part of a grave and " aged" divine, to pervert a passage which could scarcely have been made plainer. *Hilary* says that, " in the *Syna-* " *gogue*, and afterwards in the *Church*, there were " certain *Seniors* or *Elders*, without whose counsel " nothing was done in the Church." If this language does not describe a class of persons, who held an *official* station, and whose *official* duty it was to aid by their counsel in the government of the Church, then we may despair of attaching any definite meaning to words. But what decides the question is, as he further states, that in the fourth century, this plan of having *Elders*, to assist by their counsel in the government of the Church, had chiefly *grown into disuse*. Had the Christian

Church become so corrupt, in a little more than three centuries from its commencement, as to thrust all *aged persons* out of its communion? Or if the more venerable and aged were suffered to remain, were they never more consulted in cases of difficulty and danger? Besides, if there was no intention to distinguish between *Teaching* and *Ruling Elders*, why is it said that these *Seniors* or *Elders* were laid aside "on account of the *sloth*, "or rather the *pride* of the *Teachers*, who alone "wished to be something?" I can very well conceive that both the *pride* and the *sloth* of the Teaching Elders, should render them willing to get rid of a bench of officers, of *equal power* with themselves in the *government* of the Church, and able to control their wishes in cases of discipline; but I cannot conceive why either *sloth* or *pride* should prefer consulting the *young*, rather than the *aged*, on the affairs of the Church. But you will scarcely pardon me for detaining you so long with the refutation of reasonings so totally unworthy of notice.

Augustine, Bishop of *Hippo*, who also lived in the *fourth* century, often refers to this class of officers in his writings. Thus, in his work, *Contra Crescon. lib.* iii. cap. 56. he speaks of *Peregrinus, Presbyter, et Seniores Musticanæ regionis*, i. e. "Peregrine, the Presbyter, and the Elders of the "Mustacan district." And again, he addresses one of his Epistles to his Church at *Hippo*, [*Epist.* 137,] *Dilectissimis fratribus, Clero, Senioribus et*

universæ plebi ecclesiæ Hipponensis. i. e. "To the "beloved brethren, the Clergyman, the Elders, "and all the people of the Church at *Hippo.*" There were some *Elders*, then, in the days of *Augustine*, who were not Clergymen, i. e. *Lay-Elders.* It would be easy to produce, from the same writer, a number of other quotations equally to our purpose. But Dr. *Bowden* has rendered this unnecessary, by making an explicit acknowledgment, that *Augustine* repeatedly mentions these *Seniors* or *Elders* as belonging to other Churches as well as his own. And to what expedient do you suppose the Doctor resorts to avoid the consequence of this acknowledgment? Why, he gravely tells us, that he fully believes, with the "learned *Bing-*"*ham*," that there were, within the first three or four centuries, a class of aged and respectable men in the Church, who were styled *Seniors* or *Elders*, and whose *official* duty it was to assist in promoting the interests of the Church: That some of these were called *Seniores Ecclesiæ*, i. e. *Elders of the Church*, who were chosen to assist the Bishop, with their advice and counsel in the weighty affairs of the Church: and that another class were called *Seniores Ecclesiastici*, i. e. *Ecclesiastical Elders*, who were sometimes entrusted with the utensils, treasures, and outward affairs of the Church; but had no share in the administration of discipline. These he compares with the *Vestrymen* and *Church Wardens*, which are generally found in Episcopal Churches. Vol. 1. p. 205—207. Now, I ask,

what material difference can any man see between the *Seniores Ecclesiæ*, the *Lay Elders*, which Dr. *Bowden* acknowledges to have existed in the Primitive Church, and the *Lay Elders* of the Presbyterian Church? Our Elders are appointed to assist the Bishop of each particular Church with their counsel, in conducting the spiritual concerns of the Church. And is not this precisely the duty which he assigns to the *Seniores Ecclesiæ* of the Primitive Church? It is really laughable to find Dr. B. conceding, in substance, all that we desire; and yet, on account of some petty points of difference, which are too frivolous to be noticed, and which do not affect the main question, insisting that there is nothing like our *Lay Elders* to be found in primitive times!

Though the readers of my former volume, know that I have no great respect for the authority of the work generally styled *Apostolic Constitutions;* yet many Episcopal writers have expressed very high regard for this work, and entire confidence in its authenticity. And, although, when it claims *Apostolic* origin, it is to be rejected as an "impudent forgery;" yet there is a high degree of probability that it was composed, by different hands, between the *second* and *fifth* centuries. The following quotation from it will, therefore, have some weight. "To Presbyters also, when they "labour in *teaching*, let a double portion be "assigned." 11. 28. Here is, obviously, a distinction between *Elders* who are employed in

teaching, and those who are *not* so employed. *How* the others were employed, indeed, is not said; but *teaching* made no part of their official duty. We may take for granted their duty was to assist in the *other* spiritual concerns of the Church, viz. in maintaining *good order* and *discipline*. This is precisely the distinction which we make, and which we are confident was made in the Primitive Church.

It would be easy to produce many more quotations from other early writers, which ascertain the existence of these Elders, within the first three or four centuries of the Christian æra. But it is needless. Our opponents acknowledge the fact. Bishop *Taylor*, a great authority with them, among others, explicitly grants *, that a class of men, under the name of *Seniors* or *Elders*, distinguished from *Clergymen*, are mentioned by a number of early writers, as having existed in the Church at an early period, and as holding in it some kind of official station. The only question is, what *kind* of Elders they were? These gentlemen exceedingly dislike the idea of their being such *Lay-Elders* as are found in the Presbyterian Church, and assert that they were *not;* but really they offer nothing against it that deserves the name even of a plausible argument.

* I think this concession is to be found in his *Episcopacy Asserted*. That it is to be found in one of his works, I am certain.

In my former Letters, in exhibiting the testimony usually produced from *Ignatius*, I spoke of the *Presbyters* or *Elders* so frequently mentioned by that Father, in the following terms. "Some "of these *Elders* were *probably* ordained to the "work of the ministry, and of course, empowered "to preach and administer ordinances: but this "is not certain. They might *all* have been *Ru-* "*ling Elders* for aught that appears to the contra- "ry. For in all these Epistles, it is no where "said that they either preached or dispensed the "sacraments. It cannot be shown, then, that *Ig-* "*natius*, by his *Presbyters* and *Presbytery*, or *El-* "*dership*, means any thing else than a bench of "*Ruling Elders* in each Church." p. 147. This suggestion Dr. *Bowden* not only opposes with much zeal, but he also endeavours to cover it with ridicule, as perfectly frivolous and improbable. So far as he *reasons* on the point, the arguments which he employs are two. The *first* is that "there is no proof whatever that there ever was such an order of men in the Church as *Ruling Elders*." Of the force of this argument you will be able to judge, after reading what has been advanced, and what is yet to come in proof of the Apostolic institution of this class of officers. The *second* argument, is that "the Epistles of *Ignatius* are totally inconsistent with such a notion." Now, I think, in direct opposition to Dr. B. that the Epistles of *Ignatius* are strongly in favour of this "notion." When that Father says, "It is not lawful, without

" the Bishop, either to baptize, or to celebrate the " holy communion," it is evident that *his Presbyters* could not have been the *same* with those who bear that title in modern Episcopal Churches, who in virtue of their original commission, and without any subsequent permission of the Bishop, are empowered, at all times, and in all places, when called upon, to administer both Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Again; when *Ignatius* says, " Let that " Eucharist be looked upon as valid, which is ei- " ther offered by the *Bishop*, or by him to whom " the bishop has given his consent;" Dr. *Bowden* chooses to take for granted that the person to whom the Bishop *might* give his consent and who, with that consent, *might* dispense the Eucharist, was one of the *Presbyters* whom *Ignatius* distinguishes from the Bishop. But this is not said by *Ignatius;* he might mean the Bishop of some neighbouring congregation. There is not a single instance in which the pious Father represents his Presbyters as, *in fact*, preaching or administering Sacraments. But even supposing his Presbyters to be *Ruling Elders*, and supposing him to mean, that *they*, with the Bishop's (or Pastor's) leave, *might* administer both sacraments; this would only show that *Ignatius* was in an error, as *Tertullian* was after him, who, in his work *de Baptismo*, after asserting that the administration of Baptism was *appropriated* to the office of Bishop, does not scruple to say, that even a *Layman* may baptize with the Bishop's leave. There is, then, nothing in the Epis-

tles of *Ignatius* at all inconsistent with the supposition that *a portion*, or even the *whole* of his *Presbyters* were *Ruling Elders*, whose official duty it was to assist the Pastor in maintaining *order* and *discipline* in the Church.

It is no solid objection to this argument from the Fathers, that they sometimes mention these *Elders* after the *Deacons*, as if the former were inferior to the latter. Nothing can be inferred from a fact of this kind. *Ignatius*, speaking of the different classes of Church officers, expresses himself thus: "Let all reverence the *Deacons* as Je- "sus Christ; and the *Bishop* as the Father; and "the *Presbyters* as the Sanhedrim of God, and "college of the Apostles." But, notwithstanding the extravagance and impiety of this exhortation, did any one ever suppose that *Ignatius* designed to represent *Deacons* as a higher order than *Bishops*? In like manner, *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks of "*Presbyters*, *Bishops*, and *Deacons*;" but who ever dreamed that any inference with respect to the order of authority was to be drawn from this arrangement? Again; Dr. *Bowden* objects, that "*Ignatius* makes the *Deacons* a branch "of the *Ministry*; but every branch of the Mi- "nistry had authority to *preach*; consequently the "*Deacons*, instead of being inferior to the *Ruling* "*Elders*, must have been superior to them." This objection is of as little force as the last. It is notorious that the word *Ministry*, both in Scripture and the writings of the Fathers, is by no means

confined to the *Clergy*, but is frequently employed to express *any kind of official service* rendered to the Church. To produce instances in support of this position is needless. Every well-informed Divine knows it to be so. When, therefore, the word *Ministry*, unaccompanied with any distinctive epithet, is applied either to *Elders* or *Deacons*, it no more implies a power to preach, or administer sealing ordinances, nor does it throw any more light on the point of order and precedence, than the general word *officer*.

Having seen that both *Scripture* and the *Fathers* afford a clear warrant for the office of *Ruling* or *Lay Elders* in the Church; let us next inquire whether the *Reformers* and other distinguished witnesses for the truth, in different ages and countries, declared *for* or *against* this office. I know that the authority of the *Reformers* is not to be considered, any more than that of the *Fathers*, as a rule either of faith or practice; but when we recollect the great talents, the profound learning, the fervent piety, and the eminent services of many of those distinguished men, in clearing away the errors of Popery, and restoring the faith and order of the Primitive Church, we cannot fail to acknowledge that their opinions and decisions are worthy of high regard. It is worth while, therefore, to inquire what those opinions and decisions were, with respect to the question before us.

John Paul Perrin, the celebrated historian of the *Waldenses*, and who was himself one of the

Ministers of that people, in a number of places recognizes the office of *Ruling Elder* as retained in their Churches. He expressly and repeatedly asserts, that the *Synods* of the *Waldenses*, long before the time of *Luther*, were composed of *Ministers* and *Elders* *.

The same writer tells us, that, in the year 1467, the *Hussites* being engaged in reforming and separating their Churches from the Church of *Rome*, understood that there were some Churches of the ancient *Waldenses* in *Austria*, in which the purity of the Gospel was retained, and in which there were many eminent Pastors. In order to ascertain the truth of this account, they (the *Hussites*) sent two of their *Ministers* with *two Elders* to inquire into, and know what those flocks or Congregations were †.

The same Historian, in the same work, speaks of "the *Ministers* and *Elders* of the *Bohemian* Churches ‡."

The testimony of *Perrin* is supported by that of *Gillis*, another historian of the *Waldenses*, and also one of their Pastors. In the *Confession of Faith* § of that people, inserted at length in the "Addition" to his work, it is declared, (p. 490.

* *Hist. of the old Waldenses*, Part ii. Book ii. Chap. 4.

† *Ibid.* Chap. 10.

‡ *Ibid.* Chap. 9.

§ This *Confession*, *Gillis* expressly declares to have been the Confession of the ancient, as well as the modern *Waldenses*.

Art. 31.) that "It is necessary for the Church "to have *Pastors* to preach God's word, to administer the Sacraments, and to watch over the "sheep of Jesus Christ; and also *Elders* and "*Deacons*, according to the rules of good and "holy Church discipline, and the *practice of the* "*Primitive Church.*"

Here, then, is direct and unquestionable testimony that the *Waldenses*, the *Hussites*, and the *Bohemian Brethren*, had *Ruling Elders* in their Churches long before *Calvin* was born. Yet *Calvin*, we are gravely told by Dr. *Bowden* and his friends, was the *inventor* of this class of Church officers! I cannot help thinking that a "learned "man," and a "scholar," (a character which Dr. B. often impliedly assumes to himself) ought to have taken care to be better informed before he ventured to make such an assertion.

But we have still more pointed evidence that the Churches which ecclesiastical historians have generally distinguished by the title of *the Bohemian Brethren*, and which flourished before the time of *Luther*, bore their testimony in favour of the office of *Ruling Elder*, by retaining it, amidst all the degeneracy of the times. This fact is attested by *Martin Bucer*, a learned Lutheran Divine, whose fame induced Archbishop *Cranmer* to invite him to *England*, where he received preferment and patronage, and was held in high estimation. He speaks of it in the following terms:

"The *Bohemian Brethren*, who published a

" *Confession* of their faith in the year 1535, with " a preface by *Luther*, and who almost *alone* pre- " served in the world the *purity of the doctrine*, " and the *vigour of the discipline* of Christ, ob- " served an excellent rule, for which we are com- " pelled to give them credit, and especially to " praise that God who thus wrought by them; " notwithstanding those brethren are preposte- " rously despised by some learned men. The " rule which they observed was this: besides " ministers of the word and sacraments, they had, " in each Church, a bench or college of men ex- " celling in gravity and prudence, who performed " the duties of admonishing and correcting of- " fenders, composing differences, and judicially " deciding in cases of dispute. Of this kind of " Elders, *Hilary (Ambrose)* wrote, when he " said, " Therefore the Synagogue, and after- " wards the Church had Elders, without whose " counsel nothing was done *."

The celebrated *Peter Martyr*, a Protestant Divine of *Italy*, whose high reputation induced *Edward* VI. to invite him into *England*, where he was made Professor of Divinity at *Oxford*, and Canon of *Christ Church*, speaks of *Ruling Elders* in the following decisive terms: " The Church," (speaking of the Primitive Church) " had its " *Elders*, or if I may so speak, its *Senate*, who

* *Scripta duo Adversaria Latomi*, &c. in Cap. *De Eccles. Authoritat.* p. 159.

" consulted about things that were for edification " for the time being. *Paul* describes this kind of " ministry, not only in the 12th Chapter of the " Epistle to the *Romans*, but also in the first Epis- " tle to *Timothy*, where he thus writes, *Let the* " *Elders that rule well be counted worthy of dou-* " *ble honour, especially those that labour in the* " *word and doctrine.* Which words appear to me " to signify, that there were then some Elders " who taught and preached the word of God; " and another class of Elders who *did not teach*, " but *only ruled* in the Church. Concerning these " *Ambrose* speaks, when he expounds this passage " in *Timothy*. Nay, he inquires whether it was " owing to the *pride* or the *sloth* of the sacerdotal " order that they had *then* almost ceased in the " Church *."

In the *Confession of Saxony*, drawn up by *Melancthon*, in 1551, and subscribed by a large number of Lutheran Churches, we find this class of Church Officers, recognized, and represented as in use in those Churches. Speaking of the exercise of discipline, in its various parts, they say—" That " these things may be done orderly, *there be also* " *Consistories appointed in our Churches.*" Of these *Consistories*, the principal members, it is well known, were *Ruling Elders.*

That there were *Ruling Elders* in the Primitive Church, is also explicitly granted by Archbishop

* P. *Martyriæ Loci Communes.* Class iv. Cap. i. Sect. 2.

Whitgift, a warm and learned friend of Diocesan Episcopacy. "I know," says he, "that in the Pri-
"mitive Church, they had in every Church *certain*
"*Seniors*, to whom the *government* of the Congre-
"gation was committed; but *that* was before there
"was any Christian Prince or Magistrate that open-
"ly professed the Gospel; and before there was
"any Church by public authority established." And again, "Both the names and offices of *Seniors*
"were extinguished before *Ambrose* his time, as
"he himself doth testify, writing upon the *fifth* of
"the first Epistle to *Timothy*. Indeed, as *Am-*
"*brose* saith, the *Synagogue*, and after the Church,
"had *Seniors*, without whose counsel nothing was
"done in the Church; but that was *before his*
"*time*, and before there was any Christian Ma-
"gistrate, or any Church established *."

Szegedin, a very eminent Lutheran Divine, of *Hungary*, contemporary with *Luther*, also speaks decidedly of the Apostolic institution of *Ruling Elders*. The following passage is sufficient to exhibit his sentiments. "The ancient Church had
"*Presbyters* or *Elders*, of which the Apostle
"speaks, 1 *Corinth.* 5. 4. And these Elders
"were of *two kinds*. One class of them preach-
"ed the Gospel, administered the Sacraments,
"and governed the Church, the same as Bishops;
"for Bishops and Presbyters are the *same order*.
"But *another class* of Elders consisted of grave

* *Defence* against *Cartwright*. p. 638. 651.

" and upright men, taken from among the Laity, " who, together with the Preaching Elders be- " fore mentioned, consulted respecting the affairs " of the Church, and devoted their labour to ad- " monishing, correcting, and taking care of the " flock of Christ *."

Hieronymus Kromayer, a learned Lutheran Divine, and Professor of Divinity in the University of *Leipsic*, who lived in the age immediately following that of *Luther*, bears decided testimony to the Apostolic institution of *Ruling Elders*. " The " title of Bishop," says he, " takes its name from " a Greek word, which signifies an *Overseer*. " This title differs from that of *Presbyter*, be- " cause the latter is taken from *age*. Of *Presby- " ters* or *Elders* there were formerly *two* kinds, " those who *taught*, and those who exercised the " office of *Rulers* in the Church. This is taught " in 1 *Timothy* v. 17. *Let the Elders that rule well " be accounted worthy of double honour, especially " those who labour in the word and doctrine.* The lat- " ter were the same as *our Ministers*, at present; the " former were like *the members of our consistories* " *Jerome* tells us that the practice of choosing one " to preside over the rest, was brought in as a re- " medy for schism; so that a Bishop is nothing " more than the first Presbyter. This doctrine " is very offensive to the *Papists*; but we have the

* *Szegedini* Loci Communes, p. 197. Edit. quint. folio—Basil, 1608.

" word of God going before us, as a light and a " guide, and this plainly represents Presbyters " and Bishops as the *same thing**."

The learned *Voetius*, a German Divine of great eminence, also contends for the Apostolic institution of Ruling Elders. He speaks of a number of Popish writers, as particularly warm and zealous in their opposition to this class of Church officers; " Nor is this," says he, " any wonder, since no- " thing is more opposite to the Papal monarchy, " and anti-Christian tyranny, than is the institu- " tion of Ruling Elders." *Voetius* is of the opinion that the *Church Wardens* in the Church of *England* are the " vestiges" of these " Ruling " Seniors†."

Ursinus, an eminent German Divine, who lived about the same time with *Luther*, in enumerating the officers of the Church, as laid down in the word of God, speaks of *Ruling Elders* and *Deacons*. The former he defines to be officers " elect- " ed by the voice of the Church, to assist *in con-* " *ducting discipline*, and to order a variety of ne- " cessary matters in the Church." And the latter as officers, " elected by the Church, to *take care of* " *the poor*, and to *distribute alms* ‡."

After this view of the opinions of some of the most distinguished Reformers and others, in fa-

* *Historia Ecclesiastica* Autore *Hieronymo Kromayero*, D. D. & S. S. T. P. in Acad. Lips. 4to. p. 59.

† *Polit. Eccles.* Par. II. Lib. ii. Tract. 3. Cap. 4. Sect. 1. 2.

‡ *Corpus Doctrinæ.* Par. iii. p. 721.

vour of the office of *Ruling Elders*, you will not be surprised to hear, that the great body of the Reformed Churches adopted, and have always maintained, this class of officers. Instead of being confined, as Dr. *Bowden* and his friends seem to imagine, to *Geneva* and *Scotland*, they were generally introduced, with the Reformation, by *Lutherans* as well as *Calvinists;* and are generally retained to the present day, in almost all the Protestant Churches, excepting that of *England.* We have seen that the *Waldenses*, the *Hussites*, and the *Bohemian Brethren* had them long before *Calvin* was born. It is notorious that the Reformed Churches of *Germany*, *France*, *Holland*, &c. received this class of *Elders* early, and expressly represented them in their public *Confessions*, as founded on the word of God. And it is a fact equally notorious, that the *Lutherans*, as well as the *Presbyterians* in our own country, have, at this hour, *Lay Elders* to assist in the government and discipline of the Church. The truth is, that at the period of the Reformation, three fourths of the whole Protestant world declared in favour of this class of Elders; not merely as *expedient*, but as appointed in the Apostolic Church, and as necessary to be restored. And to the present time a decided majority of Protestants maintain the same opinion and practice.

Many of the objections against *Ruling Elders*, on which my opponents lay the greatest stress, are entirely groundless, and arise from a total want of

acquaintance with the nature and duties of the office. Mr. *How* speaks of them as officers invested with "*mere* temporal functions." Now this is so far from being the case, that they are not invested with "temporal functions" at all. Their office and duties are *purely spiritual.* Dr. *Kemp* represents them as "unordained" officers, and expresses much astonishment that I should insist on the *Church* having been organized after the model of the *Synagogue*, since the *Elders* of the Synagogue were *ordained*, while he asserts that those of the Presbyterian Church are *not.* This gentleman gives us to understand that he was bred a Presbyterian, and speaks of it as one of the advantages which he enjoys in conducting the controversy. But, truly, he discovers, on a variety of occasions, that he left our Church without being acquainted with even the elementary principles of its government. To prove this I need not go further than the case under consideration. The fact is, that in every regular Presbyterian Church, *Ruling Elders* are *always ordained;* sometimes with the *imposition of hands*, and sometimes without it. Both methods are in use, in different parts of *Europe*, as well as our own country. But an ordination, of some kind, is *never omitted* by those who act regularly. Perhaps Dr. *Kemp* would say, that the imposition of hands is *essential* to every ordination; and that, as we ordain our *Ruling Elders* more frequently *without* this ceremony than with it, he is warranted in representing them generally as

"unordained." If so, he is of a different mind from some of the most learned and pious bishops of the Church of *England*, who have decided that it is not the formality of laying on hands which constitutes the essence of a lawful vocation to office in the Church; but the *election* and *appointment* to the office *.

Dr. *Bowden* makes an objection to the office of *Ruling Elder*, as it exists in the Presbyterian Church, which I scarcely expected from so grave a reasoner. It is this: That if the office be such as we represent it, and the Scriptural warrant for it such as we are in the habit of quoting, especially if 1 *Tim.* v. 17. be considered as pointing out this class of Elders, that then there ought to be a *salary* or some kind of *temporal support* annexed to the office. "But," he adds, "to put a *Ruling* "*Elder* in this respect, upon a footing with a mi- "nister of the word, is altogether preposterous.

* When I began these sheets, it was my intention to take notice of all the *material* points in the Letters of Dr. *Kemp*, as well as in the writings of my other opponents; and accordingly I made a kind of engagement to do so, in a former Letter. But I had not gone far on this plan, before it became apparent that fulfilling my engagement would be equally useless and irksome. The fact is, that the "Rector of *Great* "*Choptank*," has scarcely stated a single objection or argument, but what has been exhibited with more plausibility and strength by Dr. *Bowden*. In refuting the *latter*, therefore, the *former* is, of course, refuted. On this account I beg to be excused in future, for passing over the attack of Dr. *Kemp* in silence.

" And I am convinced that your Congregations " would think it so, were it proposed to allow the " *Ruling Elders* as ample a salary as they do their " ministers, or any salary at all. Let the experi- " ment be made universally in your Churches, and " I will commit myself, that we shall never see the " face of a *Ruling Elder* again." 1. 201. But what has this to do with the Apostolic institution of the *Ruling Elder*'s office? Suppose it conceded, that a compensation *ought* to be made to this class of officers, for their services; and suppose it also conceded, that no such compensation is ever, *in fact*, made; will it follow that such officers cannot be of divine appointment? Dr. B. would think it strange reasoning in any man to infer, that, because the *labourer is worthy of his hire*, his clerical commission depends on the payment of his salary; and that if the one should be withdrawn, the other would cease with it. Did the Apostle *Paul* cease to be a Minister of Jesus Christ because *he laboured, working with his own hands, that he might not be chargeable to any;* while, at the same time, he declared, that they who *serve at the altar*, should *live by the altar*? Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose it. Yet this, even conceding the fact for which Dr. B. contends, is the amount of his whole argument.

But the fact cannot be conceded. If Dr. *Bowden* had been as well acquainted with the Presbyterian Church, as a discreet man would have taken care to be, before he suffered himself to speak so

confidently on the subject, he would have known, that a compensation for their services has often been made to *Ruling Elders*; and that the nature and amount of this compensation, depend on the circumstances of the *Elders* themselves, and of the Church which they serve.

But, leaving this collateral inquiry, it is time that we should return to the main question; which shall be resumed in the next Letter.

LETTER V.

Testimony of the Fathers.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IN my former volume, while I insisted that the cause in question should be tried at the bar of *Scripture* alone, and utterly protested against the jurisdiction of the *Fathers*, I still consented to examine their testimony, and devoted two long Letters to that examination. In those Letters, if more impartial judges, as well as myself, are not deceived, there is abundant proof, that the *Fathers* of the FIRST TWO CENTURIES, do not contain *a sentence* that can be justly construed in favour of Prelacy; but that, on the contrary, their testimony is decisively favourable to Presbyterian parity. Dr. *Bowden*, indeed, is of a different opinion, and speaks with great confidence and asperity in a different strain. But after the specimen which has been given of the manner in which that gentleman can treat demonstrative proof, and even plain declarations of Scripture, we need not wonder that, in his eyes, every argument is "frivolous," and even "contemptible cavilling," which opposes his Episcopal creed.

I have neither the leisure nor the patience again to go over the whole ground of the testimony of the *Fathers* on this subject. My only design in the present Letter, is, with great brevity, to examine a few of the strictures of Dr. *Bowden*; to confirm some of my statements which have been most confidently and boldly called in question; and to supply some of the defects of my former Letters on this part of the controversy.

Suffer me, my brethren, again to remind you of the principle on which we proceed, in this part of our inquiry. If it could be demonstrated from the writings of the Fathers, that, in one hundred, or even in fifty years, after the death of the last Apostle, the system of Diocesan Episcopacy had been generally adopted in the Church, it would be nothing to the purpose. As long as no traces of this fact could be found in the Bible, but much of a directly opposite nature, we should stand on a secure and immoveable foundation. To all reasonings, then, derived from the *Fathers*, I answer with the venerable *Augustine*, who, when pressed with the authority of *Cyprian*, replied, "His wri-" tings I hold not to be canonical, but examine " them by the canonical writings: And in them, " what agreeth with the authority of Divine Scrip-" ture, I accept, with his praise; what agreeth " not, I reject with his leave*."

But our refusal to be tried by the Fathers, is

* *Contra Crescon.* II. Cap. 32.

founded on *principle*, and not upon any fear of the result of such a trial. We know what their writings contain; and are sure that our Episcopal brethren would lose instead of gaining, by an impartial examination of their testimony. We are perfectly ready, then, to meet Dr. *Bowden* or any other man, and to hear what he has to say on this department of evidence.

In entering on this branch of the controversy in my former Letters, I made the following remarks: "Before we proceed to examine the testimony of the *Fathers*, let us be careful to recollect precisely, what our Episcopal brethren contend for, and what they are bound to prove by these witnesses, in order to make good their claims. When they show us passages in which these early writers merely speak of *Bishops*, they seem to imagine that their point is gained: but such passages are, in fact, nothing to their purpose. We do not deny that there were *Bishops* in the Primitive Church: on the contrary, we contend that the word *Bishop* was a title given, in Apostolic times and long afterwards, to every pastor of a particular congregation. Again, when they quote passages which barely enumerate *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*, as distinct officers in the Church, they can derive no assistance even from these; because there were, doubtless, *Presbyters*, at that time, as well as now, who, though in *full orders*, were not invested with a *pastoral charge;* and who must, therefore, be distinguished from such as were literally *Overseers*

or *Bishops* of particular flocks. Besides, we know that there were *Ruling Elders* in the primitive Church; a class of Presbyters confessed to be inferior to Bishops in their ecclesiastical character. In enumerating Church officers, then, there was frequently a necessity for making the distinction above stated, without in the least favouring the pretended *superiority of order* among those who laboured in the word and doctrine. No; the advocates for diocesan Episcopacy, if they would derive any support to their cause from the writings of the Fathers, must do what they have never yet done. They must produce, from those venerable remains of antiquity, passages which prove, either by direct assertion, or fair inference, that the *Bishops* of the Primitive Church were a *distinct order* of Clergy from those *Presbyters* who were authorized to preach and administer sacraments, and superior to them; that these *Bishops*, when they were advanced to this superior office, had a new and distinct *ordination;* that each Bishop had under him a number of congregations, with their Pastors, whom he governed; that these Bishops were exclusively invested with the right of *ordaining*, and administering the rite of *confirmation;* and that this kind of Episcopacy was considered, by *the whole* primitive Church, as an institution of Jesus Christ. When any *one* of these facts is fairly proved, from early antiquity, the friends of Presbyterian Church Government will feel as if they had something like solid argument to contend with; but not till then.

Now, after having given much close and serious attention to this subject, I can venture to assure you, that in all the authentic writings which have come down to us, of those Fathers who lived within the first *two hundred years* after Christ, there is not a *single sentence* which can be considered, by an impartial reader, as affording the least support to *any one* of these positions."

Of these remarks I cannot find that Dr. *Bowden* has taken the least notice. He goes on, falling into the very errors, against which he was thus explicitly warned; and confidently urging the very arguments which are here shown to be worthless. For instance, when he finds one of the early Fathers speaking of a particular person as *Bishop* of a certain Church, he immediately takes for granted that a Prelatical Bishop was intended, and declaims accordingly with all the parade of complete triumph. But this is a gross and most unwarrantable begging of the question. The word *Bishop* unquestionably decides nothing in his favour; for Dr. B. and all our opponents, acknowledge, what we know to have been the fact, that this title was applied, in the days of the Apostles, and is expressly used by the inspired writers, to designate the Pastors of single Congregations. Nay, they acknowledge, that for near an hundred years after the Apostolic age, the titles of *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were often interchangeably applied to the same persons. When we attempt to derive an argument from the application of the title *Bishop* to

the Pastors of single Churches, which is undoubtedly to be found in Scripture, they do not attempt to deny the fact; but insist that the argument from *names* is of no value. But why is it of more value in one case than another? If a *name* decides nothing when found in the *Bible*, it decides nothing when found in the *Fathers*. When, therefore, so much is made of the mere insulated title of *Bishop*, when found in the early writers, it is mere imposition on vulgar credulity. No inference can be legitimately drawn from it, in the least degree favourable to the Episcopal cause.

Again; when Dr. B. finds *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*, mentioned separately, and distinguished from each other, in some of the early Fathers, he never fails immediately to rush to the conclusion, that different *orders* or *ranks* of clergy were intended by this distinct enumeration. But this conclusion is no less illogical and groundless than the former. Dr. B. knows, or ought to know, that, on Presbyterian principles, though every *Bishop* is a *Presbyter*, yet every *Presbyter* is not a *Bishop;* since no man can, with propriety, according to our system, receive the latter title unless he have the Pastoral charge of a Congregation. We have satisfactory proof that there were, in the Primitive Church, Clergymen in *full orders*, that is, empowered to preach and administer sacraments, who yet had no Pastoral charge; but acted the part of *Assistants* or *Curates* to the *Pastor*, *Rector*, or *Bishop*. Now, in what manner could *such*

persons be distinguished from those who were invested with a Pastoral charge, but by calling the one class *Bishops*, and the other *Presbyters?* In the Presbyterian Church, we distinguish them in this manner; and in the Church of *England*, they distinguish them by calling the former *Rectors*, and the latter *Curates*. And with just as much reason might some person, five hundred years hence, assert that *Pastors* and *Assistant Presbyters*, or *Rectors* and *Curates*, were different *orders* of Clergy in the eighteenth century; as Dr. *Bowden* can now insist that *Bishops* and *Presbyters* were different orders in the primitive Church. The argument is totally delusive; nor could it have been so often and so gravely repeated, had there not been, on the part of those who have urged it, a miserable deficiency of sounder proof.

But further; I have proved, in the foregoing Letter, that there were *Ruling*, as well as *Teaching* Presbyters, or *Elders*, in the Apostolic Church, and for several centuries after the Apostolic age. It was, doubtless, necessary, sometimes at least, to speak of *this* class of officers, as distinguished from those who, in the character of *Pastors*, preached and administered Sacraments. And what method of making this distinction was more convenient than that which we now employ, when we divide our Church officers into three general classes, viz. *Bishops*, *Elders*, and *Deacons?* In whatever point of light, then, we view this three-fold distinction, which is sometimes met

with in the early writers, it cannot, in the smallest degree, serve the cause of Prelacy.

Dr. *Bowden* makes a number of complaints respecting my manner of stating the testimony of the *Fathers*. I shall consider, and endeavour to answer these complaints, before I proceed to exhibit such further testimony from those early writers, as appears to me favourable to the doctrine of Presbyterian parity.

He complains, in the first place, that I have *omitted* to state some material testimony from writers of the *second* century. He evidently intimates, that this omission was designed; and that it is a very important one; and undertakes to supply it by bringing forward a few detached scraps from three early writers. These writers are *Dionysius*, *Polycrates*, and *Hegesippus*. To render the charge of omission more serious, the Doctor inserts it in a long and solemn list of accusations, to which he endeavours to give as much point as possible, at the close of his work.

This charge surprises me, on a variety of accounts. Had I *professed* to give ALL the testimony, which the first two centuries furnish, Dr. B. might justly have complained of *any* omission. But when *no such* profession was made; when the *contrary* was distinctly announced; when I formally, and more than once stated, that *not the whole*, but the *great body* of the strongest and most important testimony was intended to be brought forward; and when, from the very nature and

size of my work, nothing more than a *selection*, and even *that* a very limited one, was *possible;* it is more than wonderful that an imputation so serious should be advanced, even if I had omitted to produce passages of real importance. But this is far from being the case. The passages concerning which so formal and heavy a complaint is made, will be found, on examination, to be of no solid value to the advocates of Episcopacy. What do these writers say? Why, *Dionysius*, who lived about the year 170, and whose writings are all lost, excepting a few sentences, preserved by *Eusebius*, is represented by that historian as speaking of several persons as *Bishops* of particular Churches. *Polycrates*, also, who lived about the year 180, and of whose writings we have nothing except a fragment or two, preserved by a writer who lived long after him, simply says, that *Timothy* was ordained *Bishop* of *Ephesus*, by the great *Paul;* speaks of *Polycarp* as Bishop of *Smyrna;* and of himself and six others, as having been Bishops of *Ephesus*, in succession, after *Timothy*. And *Hegesippus*, contemporary with *Polycrates*, of whom nothing remains, but a few detached sentences, recorded by *Eusebius*, only says that one *Primus* was Bishop of *Corinth;* that *Anicetus*, *Soter*, and *Eleutherius* were successively Bishops of *Rome;* and that *James* was constituted Bishop of *Jerusalem*, because he was the Lord's near kinsman. But what is the amount of this testimony? It is really

too frivolous to be treated with respect. What Presbyterian ever doubted that there were *Bishops*, in the primitive Church; not only in *Jerusalem*, *Ephesus*, *Corinth*, and *Rome*, but also in every other city or town on the globe, where a congregation of Christians was organized? And when it has not only been demonstrated, but also acknowledged by our opponents, that the word *Bishop* was applied, in the days of the Apostles, and for a considerable time afterwards, to those who were not Prelates, it is really something worse than trifling, still to insist upon an argument founded upon an equivocal title, and only calculated to insult the discerning, or to deceive the unwary.

But why did Dr. *Bowden* mention the testimony of *three* Fathers only, as having been omitted? Why did he not enumerate *Bachylus* of *Corinth*, *Serapion*, and others, in the second century, who are represented as having left writings, in which, though now lost, the word *Bishop* was found? The truth is, I considered all this testimony as vague and irrelevant; and am still confident, that in the *selection* of testimony from the Fathers of the first two centuries, which I professed to make, I did full justice to the Episcopal side of the question. There was no passage omitted which can be considered as speaking *more* forcibly in their favour, than several which were exhibited; nor any which wear, in my opinion, so plausible an aspect, as some which I candidly brought forward. Nor can I believe that Dr. *Bowden* would have com-

plained so loudly of the omission of testimony, had he not felt that every scrap which bears the most distant appearance of plausibility, is necessary to assist his cause.

With respect to another charge of Dr. *Bowden*, that I have omitted to produce certain testimony from some of the Fathers of the *third* and *fourth* centuries, it is scarcely worthy of an answer. In entering on this part of the controversy in my former Letters, I made the following explicit declaration:

"In examing the writings of the Fathers, I "shall admit only the testimony of those who "wrote within the FIRST TWO CENTURIES. Im- "mediately after this period so many corruptions "began to creep into the Church; so many of the "most respectable Christian writers are known to "have been heterodox in their opinions; so much "evidence appears, that even before the com- "mencement of the third century, the Papacy be- "gan to exhibit its pretensions; and such multi- "plied proofs of wide spreading degeneracy crowd "into view, that the testimony of every subsequent "writer is to be received with suspicion. Besides, "if diocesan Episcopacy existed, and were of the "fundamental importance that our Episcopal bre- "thren make it to be, we may surely expect to "find some reference to it in the records of *two* "*hundred years;* and especially when we consi- "der that those were years of the greatest simpli- "city and purity ever known to the Church." As

ter such a declaration, who would have expected to find it imputed to me, as an unfair proceeding, that I had not exhibited the *whole* testimony of the Fathers of the *third* and *fourth* centuries; especially after conceding, in the most unequivocal manner, that clerical imparity had begun to appear in the *third*, and was established in the *fourth* century? But I forbear. To take up your time in replying to cavils of this nature, even if one had patience enough for the purpose, would be equally irksome and useless.

In my former Letters, I omitted to examine the testimony of the *Apostolical Canons*, and the *Apostolical Constitutions;* and assigned as a reason for the omission that I considered them as spurious and unworthy of credit. With this omission, and the reason for it, Dr. *Bowden* is much offended. He does not, indeed, attempt to establish the authenticity of the *Apostolical Constitutions;* but for that of the *Canons* he contends with ardent zeal. He charges me with having "vilified" them; and thinks, if I had ever read *Beveridge*'s defence of them, I should have been more "cautious" and "modest." I beg leave to inform my "learned" antagonist, that I am not an entire stranger to *Beveridge*'s work, and that after weighing his arguments as impartially as I can, I am still so "incau-" tious" and "immodest" as to believe that these *Canons* are not what they profess to be. *Beveridge* himself does not contend that they were made by the *Apostles;* and Dr. *Bowden* acknowledges the

same thing. They are not, therefore, *Apostolical* Canons. The learned *Daillé* is of the opinion that they were not compiled till the *fifth* century; *Blondel* dates their compilation towards the close of the *third* century; and even *Beveridge* himself, their most partial defender, supposes them to be the decrees of Synods in the *second* and *third* centuries, collected at different times, and by different hands. Now, so far as they belong to the *third* century, the line which I have drawn excludes them from my notice. When Dr. *Bowden* can decide *which* of them were formed in the *second* century, and which of them are of a later date, I shall consider myself as bound by my plan to examine the former class, and not before.

But, if I do not mistake, some imputations may be brought against both the "caution" and the "modesty" of Dr. *Bowden* himself, in this business. It would be easy to produce a number of Episcopal writers, of the highest reputation for talents and learning, who have, without ceremony, pronounced the *Apostolical Canons*, as well as the *Apostolical Constitutions*, to be destitute of authenticity. Dr. B. certainly could not have been acquainted with these writers, of his own Church; as it is not supposable that he would set up *his* judgment in opposition to theirs. Among others, Bishop *Taylor*, who was at least as competent a judge as Dr. B. speaks of the writings in question in the following language:

" Even of the fifty *(Canons)* which are most " respected, it is evident that there are *some things* " *so mixed* with them, and no mark of difference " left, that the credit of *all* is *much impaired;* in- " somuch that *Isidore*, of *Seville*, says, " they " were *apocryphal*, made by hereticks, and pub- " lished under the title Apostolical; but neither " the *Fathers* nor the Church of *Rome* did give " assent to them*."

Dr. *Bowden* not only charges me with *omitting* to state the testimony of some Fathers, but also with *misrepresenting* that of others. Most of the instances which he produces in support of this charge, do not appear to me entitled to any reply. Of a few, however, it may be proper to take a cursory notice.

He asserts that I have misrepresented the testimony of *Ignatius;* but wherein does this misrepresentation consist? Dr. *Bowden* will not dare to deny that *my* quotations from that Father are larger and more numerous than *his own;* nor will he dare to deny, that I have selected, and fairly exhibited, those very quotations which high churchmen have generally adduced as, in their view, most decisive in favour of Prelacy. In what respect, then, have I been guilty of *misrepresentation?* He will probably reply that my *comments* on the testimony of *Ignatius* are unfair. The best answer to this charge will be a dispassionate review of those comments;

* *Liberty of Prophesying*, Sect. 5. Art. 9.

and I will venture to say, that no one who takes this trouble, will find any thing in them but what is natural, probable, and abundantly warranted by the strain of the testimony itself.

Ignatius, indeed, speaks much of Bishops. But I have shown that this title furnishes no ground of argument in favour of Prelacy. He speaks much, too, of *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*, as distinguished from each other: but I have also clearly shown that this distinction is perfectly consistent with our doctrine of ministerial parity; and that to represent it in a different light, is a mere begging of the question in dispute. But I will go further, and again venture, with greater confidence than ever, to repeat my former assertion, that the *Bishop* so often mentioned by *Ignatius* is evidently a *parochial* and not a *diocesan* Bishop. If the *Bishop* to whom this Father refers, was the only person, in each Church, empowered to *baptize*, and administer the *Lord's Supper*; if no *marriage* could take place without his knowledge and consent; if it was considered as his duty to be *personally acquainted* with all his flock, to take notice with his own eye of those who were *present* and *absent* at the time of public worship, to attend to the *widows* and the *poor* of his congregation, to seek out all *by name*, and not to overlook even the *men* and *maid-servants* of the flock committed to his charge; then, surely, no man in his senses can suppose that this officer could have been any other than a *parochial* Bishop or *Pastor*. I know that

Dr. *Bowden* is of the opinion, and endeavours to show, that the *duties* which I have stated, are *not* all represented by *Ignatius* as belonging to his Bishop. I do not consider it as worth while to take up your time in discussing this point. Let any one look over the Epistles of *Ignatius*, or if he cannot have access to them, let him look over the extracts which I have given in my former Letters, including those on which Dr. B. lays the greatest stress, and then let him say whether it is possible to reconcile the whole strain and language of that venerable Father with any other than *parochial* or *Presbyterian* Episcopacy? For my part, though Dr. B. very delicately loads this suggestion with the terms "nonsense," "contemptible puerility," &c. I am persuaded every impartial reader will say, it is both sounder sense, and better logic, than this gentleman, with all his "scholar-like" management, has drawn from the testimony of the pious martyr. In short, Dr. *Bowden* may fume and fret as long and as much as he pleases, but, after all that he has said, or can say, nothing intelligible can be made of the *Bishop*, *Presbyters*, and *Deacons* of that Father, materially different from the *Pastor*, *Elders*, and *Deacons* of every regularly organized Presbyterian Church.

Dr. *Bowden* supposes that Presbyterians consider the *Bishop* so often mentioned by *Ignatius*, in no other light than as the *Moderator* of some ecclesiastical assembly. Assuming this as our opinion, he attempts to pour ridicule upon it, by substi-

tuting the word *Moderator* for *Bishop*, and endeavouring to show that the supposition is utterly inconsistent with the representation given of the duties of this officer. When a man does not *comprehend* the subject which he attempts to ridicule, he is extremely apt to draw upon himself the laughter which he thought to turn against others. This is the unfortunate situation of Dr. *Bowden*. He seizes upon a detached fragment of Presbyterian doctrine; and, imagining that he sees and understands the whole system, he thinks to involve that system, in the absurdity which he makes to recoil upon his own.

Dr. *Bowden* ought to know, that *Bishop* and *Moderator* are not convertible terms; and that they are not so considered by Presbyterians. We suppose, and believe it is easy to prove, that the word *Bishop*, in the Apostolic age, signified, simply, the *Pastor* or *Overseer* of a flock, or single congregation. Accordingly we conclude that there were several organized Churches both at *Ephesus* and *Philippi*, in the days of the Apostles, because the Scriptures expressly tell us that, at that time, there were *several Bishops* in both those cities. We have shown, too, that each Church, in the days of the Apostles, was commonly furnished with a bench of *Ruling Elders*, and *Deacons*. We have also reason to believe, that, in large congregations, there were several Elders who, as assistants, laboured in the word and doctrine. The Pastor, that is the Presbyter who was particularly invested with the Pas-

toral charge, was called *the Bishop* of that Church; and when the Elders came together, and sat as a *Church session*, or ecclesiastical court, he, of course presided as their *Moderator*. It is easy to perceive, however, that this *Bishop* was equally such, both in *fact*, and in *name*, whether he was ever called to act as *Moderator* or not. The mere circumstance of his having no bench of Elders, and no *Church session* in which to preside, did not destroy or affect his Pastoral character. We maintain, that there was no other species of *Bishop*, during the time of the Apostles, than such as has been described, that is, the Pastor of a single flock or Church.

But we suppose that, very early after the Apostle's days, when the congregations, and, of course, the Pastors, in large cities, became numerous, and frequently convened for the transaction of ecclesiastical business, that the custom was adopted of choosing one person, generally the most aged and venerable of the number, to act as *President*, *Chairman*, or *Moderator*, and that, after a while, the title of *Bishop* was, by way of eminence conferred on him; and, in process of time, gradually *appropriated* to him. Hence it is a notorious fact, which our Episcopal brethren do not pretend to deny, that Bishops, in the *second* and *third* centuries, were frequently distinguished by the titles, PRESIDENT, CHAIRMAN, and the *person who filled the* FIRST SEAT *in the Presbytery*. But this no more implied, nor, at that time, was considered as im-

plying, a superiority of *rank* or *order*, on the part of the *Chairman*, than the office of *Moderator* in one of our *Presbyteries* or *Synods*, clothes the Pastor who fills it with a permanent superiority of order over his brethren.

In some cities, however, it is evident that a different plan was pursued. When the converts to the Christian faith became so numerous, that they were no longer able to worship in one assembly; and especially when a number of persons from the neighbouring villages joined the city Church, some of these members began to lay plans for forming separate and smaller congregations nearer home. To this the Bishop consented, on condition that the little worshipping societies thus formed should consider themselves as still under his pastoral care, as amenable to the parent Church, and as bound to obey him as their spiritual guide. When the *Pastor* agreed to this arrangement, it was generally understood, that there should be but one *Communion table*, and one *Baptistery* in the city or parish; and, of course, that when the members of these neighbouring societies wished to receive either of the sacraments, they were to attend at the parent Church, and receive them from the hands of the *Pastor* or *Bishop* himself. The ordinary services of public worship on the Lord's day, were performed at little *oratories*, or *chapels of ease*, planted at different and convenient places within the parish; and on these, it was considered as sufficient for the *assistant* preachers, or *curates* to at-

tend. But at special seasons, at least *once* or *twice* in the year, every Church-member was held under obligations to attend the Mother Church, and commune with the Pastor himself. This was laying the foundation for the authority of one Bishop or Pastor over several distinctly organized congregations, which, not long afterwards, was claimed and yielded.

We have specimens of a similar arrangement in modern times. Fifteen years ago all the Episcopal inhabitants of the city of *New-York*, were under the pastoral care of the *Rector* of *Trinity-Church*. In the beginning, that *Rector* had only one Church under his inspection, and was himself the only Preacher in it. But when a *second* and a *third* were built, and a large congregation established in each, it was still thought proper to retain the whole under the care of one *Pastor* with several *Assistants;* so that when there were three Episcopal Churches, and probably from *eight* to *ten thousand* Episcopalians in the city, there was still but one *Rector* over the whole, with a number of *Assistant Clergymen*, who were considered, and treated as officially subordinate to him. Yet these *Assistant Clergymen* had, in reality, the same ordination with their *Rector;* were as perfectly qualified as himself, to take a *Rectorate* or *Pastoral charge*, without any new ordination; and were of the same ecclesiastical *order*, although, as long as they retained this relation to him, they were *his clergy*, and were under his control in all their professional

services. The whole city was, to all intents and purposes, *one parish*, and the *Rector* its ecclesiastical head.

That an arrangement substantially of this kind was frequent in the *second* and *third* centuries, is not merely a supposition of mine; but is asserted by a number of the best informed and most able advocates of Prelacy. The learned *Mede*, a zealous Episcopal divine, in his *Discourse on Churches*, p. 48. says, "Nay, more than this, it should "seem that in those first times, before dioceses "were divided into those lesser and subordinate "Churches, which we now call parishes, and Pres-"byters assigned to them, they had only *one Altar* "to a Church, taking Church for the company or "corporation of the faithful, united under one *Bi-"shop* or *Pastor;* and that was in the city or "place where the Bishop had his see and re-"sidence. Unless this were so, whence came it "else, that a schismatical Bishop was said, *consti-"tuere* or *collocare aliud altare?* And that a *Bi-"shop* and an *Altar* are made correlatives?"

The same fact is asserted by Bishop *Stilling fleet*, in his *Sermon against Separation.* "Though, "when the Churches increased," says he, "the "*occasional meetings* were frequent in several "places; yet still there was but *one Church;* and "*one Altar*, and *one Baptistery*, and *one Bishop*, "with many Presbyters assisting him. Which, "is so plain, in antiquity, as to the Churches "planted by the Apostles themselves, that none

" but a great stranger to the history of the Church " can call it in question. 'Tis true, after some " time, in the greater cities, they had distinct " places allotted, and Presbyters fixed among " them. And such *allotments* were called *Tituli* " at *Rome*, and *Lauræ* at *Alexandria*, and *Parishes* " in other places. But these were never thought, " then, to be *new Churches*, or to have any inde- " pendent government in themselves, but were " all in subjection to the *Bishop* and his college of " *Presbyters;* of which multitudes of examples " might be brought from the most authentic testi- " monies of antiquity, if a thing so evident need- " ed any proof at all. And yet this distribution " (into distinct *Tituli*) even in cities, was looked " on as so uncommon in those elder times, that " *Epiphanius* takes notice of it as an *extraordina-* " *ry* thing at *Alexandria;* and, therefore, it is " probably supposed that there was no such thing " in all the cities of *Crete* in his time."

Accordingly *Ignatius*, in his Epistle to the *Philadelphians*, declares, " There is, to every Church, " *one Altar*, and *one Bishop*." And he elsewhere represents it as a characteristic of the *unity* of a Church, that there is one *Altar*, and one *Bishop* in each. *Cyprian*, in like manner, repeatedly speaks of setting up a *new Altar*, or *Communion table* within the parish or diocese of a Pastor, without his leave, as irregular and schismatical. These facts perfectly agree with the declaration made by several of the Fathers, that administering the ordi-

nance of *Baptism* was considered as the *appropriate* work of the Bishop within the bounds of his Church; and also that the members of each church received the *Lord's Supper* from no other hands than those of their *Bishop*. Accordingly Dr. *Hammond*, a zealous friend of Prelacy, expressly affirms, that in the days of *Tertullian*, all Christians received the *Eucharist* from no other than the *Bishop*'s hands*; and Dr. *Heylin*, an Episcopalian of still higher tone, distinctly acknowledges the same fact†. To suppose that these representations are consistent with the Episcopal arrangement, in which a number of distinct and independent congregations, each supplied with a Pastor or *Rector*, are all under the government of a Prelate, in the habit of visiting each congregation once or twice every year, is manifestly absurd. They can only be reconciled with a system in which, as in the Presbyterian Church, the *Pastor* or *Bishop* is made overseer of a single Flock or Church; is ordinarily the sole dispenser of the word and ordinances in that Church; and must be consulted, and his leave directly or indirectly obtained, when others attempt to dispense them within his parish.

We are now prepared to determine what kind of Bishop *Ignatius* was, and in what sense the other contemporary Pastors were addressed by that Father under this title. If we suppose that in each

* *Dissertat.* iii. *Cap.* vii. § 5.

† *History of Episcopacy*, Part ii. p. 96, 97

of the cities of *Antioch*, *Smyrna*, &c. there was only a *single congregation* of Christians, then the case is plain. Those venerable ministers were only Pastors or Bishops of single flocks, in perfect conformity with the Presbyterian model. But let us suppose that there were several large worshipping assemblies of Christians in each of those cities. It is true, the epistles of *Ignatius* do not give the least hint that this *was* the case; and we only infer it, from probable evidence, derived from other sources, without being able, on either side, to establish or to disprove the fact. Let it be admitted, however, that there were several worshipping assemblies in each of these cities; still this fact proves nothing in favor of prelacy. Their Pastors might each have had several congregations under their care, and several clergymen to assist them, without being Prelates, any more than the *Rector of Trinity-Church* thirty years ago was a Prelate. But we may go even further. Suppose it abundantly proved, that in the days of *Ignatius*, there were established in each of the cities of *Antioch*, *Smyrna*, &c. a number of separate and distinctly organized congregations, and that each was under the care of a Pastor. And suppose it further proved that, notwithstanding this *Ignatius* was, by way of eminence, styled *Bishop* of *Antioch*, and *Polycarp* Bishop of *Smyrna;* still the fact, even if established, would be perfectly consistent with Presbyterian parity. We have only to suppose these men were *Moderators* of the respective *Presbyteries* of those

cities, and all is natural, intelligible, and probable. In this case, we may consider all the instructions concerning *Bishops* and their *flocks*, which the *epistles* in question contain, as merely conveyed through the medium of the senior or presiding Pastor, to his colleagues, and as intended equally for all. Thus it appears that the epistles of *Ignatius* do not, on any supposition, contain a sentence which can be legitimately construed in favour of Prelacy; and that all the confidence of my opponents in asserting the contrary, is groundless and futile.

Dr. *Bowden* is equally positive, that I have misrepresented the testimony of *Irenæus*. Here again I beg of you impartially to review the extracts which I gave from the writings of that Father, and my comments upon them, together with all that Dr. B. has said on the subject; and then to decide between us. It is plain, and Dr. B. does not deny, that *Irenæus* speaks of certain persons, by name, as *Presbyters*, and represents them as *successors* of the *Apostles*. It is equally plain, that he speaks of the *same* persons, in another place, as *Bishops*, and, under that title also, represents them as having *the succession* from the Apostles. He does this, not *once* merely, but *several* times, and with as much point, and apparent care, as if his grand object had been to show that *Presbyters* and *Bishops* were then the same. The argument arising from this language is obviously in our favour. Dr. *Bowden*, indeed, thinks otherwise, and makes an attempt to answer it; but his embarrassment, and inability to

accomplish his purpose, must be apparent to every reader.

Dr. *Bowden* lays much stress on a passage in *Irenæus*, in which he speaks of these persons, whom he alternately calls *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, as succeeding the Apostles in their *mastership*. What is *mastership?* Simply, *official authority*. And what has this to do with Prelacy? Nothing. Suppose a Presbyterian were to say, "The *Bishops* "of our Church are the successors of the Apostles, "and succeed to as much of their *authority* or "*mastership*, as was intended to be perpetual in "the Church:" would any intelligent person who heard him, imagine that he was speaking a language either favourable to diocesan Episcopacy, or hostile to his own principles? Certainly not. And yet this language coincides, in every essential point, with that of *Irenæus*.—Dr. *Bowden* seems not to understand, or perpetually to forget, that we consider our Pastors or Bishops as the true and proper successors of the Apostles, so far as their office was ordinary and intended to be transmitted; and that we consider them as invested with the highest authority, or (if he prefer the word,) *mastership* in the Church.

But that part of the testimony of *Irenæus* to which Dr. *Bowden* attaches the greatest importance, is, that he represents the *succession* in the Church of *Rome* as flowing through *single* ministers whom he styles Bishops; although we have reason to believe that there were many Presbyters connected with

the Church in that city. Now, if there were *a number* of Bishops, in our sense of the word, in *Rome*, how, it is asked, could *Irenæus* trace the line of succession through *single* persons only? In other words, why does he single out *Linus*, *Anacletus*, *Clemens*, and *Evaristus*, as successively Bishops of *Rome*, when, according to our doctrine, there were, pretty certainly, a number of contemporary ministers in that Church, of the *same rank* with those whose names are mentioned? I answer, this statement of *Irenæus* is *not to be relied on;* and if it *were*, it is nothing to the purpose.

I say, the statement of this Father, respecting the succession in the Church of *Rome*, is *not to be relied upon.* He says that *Anacletus* was before *Clemens*, and next to *Linus.* *Tertulian* and several others assure us that *Clemens* was next to *Peter*, and, of course, before *Anacletus.* *Epiphanius* and *Optatus* say that *Anacletus* and *Cletus* were before *Clemens.* While *Augustine*, *Damasus*, and others, assert that *Anacletus*, *Cletus*, and *Linus*, were all antecedent to *Clemens.* Here is perfect confusion. It is evident that these writers were guided by vague and contradictory traditions, and knew nothing of the matter. The probability, from the very face of the story, is that the Bishops or Pastors of whom they speak, did not all sit in the pastoral chair of *Rome* singly, and in succession, but several of them together. Accordingly *Damasus*, in his work *De Gestis Pontificum*, hath these words: "St. Peter ordained two Bishops, *Linus* and *Cle-*

" *tus*, who, in their own persons, should perform all " sacred offices to the Roman people." It is true these words are not to be found in the *printed* editions of that work; but they are in *all* the *manuscript* copies, and so they are cited by *Marianus Scotus*, as the learned *Vossius* assures us; who adds, " That the succession of Bishops at *Rome*, in a " single person, began under *Evaristus*. Before " his time two or three sat together*." The learned *Junius*, also, an illustrious Reformer of *Holland*, nearly contemporary with *Luther*, speaking of the contradictory testimony of the Fathers, respecting the succession of the first Bishops or Pastors of *Rome*, delivers the following decisive opinion. " These, or some of these, were Pres- " byters or Bishops of *Rome*, at the same time, " ruling the Church in common. But the follow- " ing writers, fancying to themselves such Bishops " as had then obtained in the Church, fell into these " snares of tradition, because they supposed, accor- " ding to the custom of their own times, that there " could be but one Bishop in one Church at the " same time†."

But, granting that there is no mistake in the testimony of *Irenæus;* granting that it is all authentic and worthy of confidence; it proves nothing inconsistent with the doctrine of Presbyterian parity. What though the pious Father represents a succes-

* OWEN's *History of Ordination*, Chap. I. Prop. vii.

† JUNII *Controv.* Lib. ii. Cap. 5. Not. 18.

sion of single persons as styled *Bishops* in the Church of *Rome?* They might have been the *senior Pastors* of that city, or they might have been the successive *Moderators* of the city Presbytery. Or a few names might have been selected out of a number of contemporary ministers, of the same ecclesiastical order, on account of their superiour age, talents, or weight of character. In short, a variety of suppositions may be made concerning them, all equally reconcileable with Presbyterian principles, and with the language of *Irenæus;* but none of them giving the least countenance to the prelatical doctrine of different orders of clergy.

But the most extraordinary charge of Dr. B. is that I have misrepresented and perverted the testimony of *Jerome.* He insists that *Jerome* says nothing, which can be justly construed as intimating that ministerial parity existed in the Apostolic Church; but much of a directly opposite import. With a man who can persist in assertions of this kind, in the face of evidence so clear and indubitable, it is vain to reason. Let me request you, brethren, again to review the long and faithful extracts from the writings of this Father, which are contained in the *fifth* of my former Letters, and then decide whether it is possible for sophistry itself to set aside testimony so full and positive. What does *Jerome* say? Instead of speaking "obscurely," or "doubtfully," as Dr. B. alleges, his declarations on this point are absolutely among the most express and unequivocal passages to be found on

any subject, in all antiquity! He says, in so many words, that in the beginning, "Not only in *his* "opinion, but also in that of *Scripture*, Bishop "and Presbyter were *the same*, the one being the "name of *age*, the other of *office*."—And again, "Among the *ancients*, Presbyters and Bishops "were *the same*."—And again, "A Presbyter is "the same as a Bishop; and before there were, by "the devil's influence, parties in religion, the "Churches were governed by the common coun-"cil of Presbyters." To prove this, he formally quotes passages from the *Acts of the Apostles*, from the Epistle to the *Philippians*, from the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, from the first Epistle of *Peter*, and from the second and third Epistles of *John*:—The very passages which are generally quoted by Presbyterians in favour of their doctrine. *Jerome* further declares that *afterwards* the practice was introduced of placing one of the Presbyters above the rest, as a remedy against schism. He declares, expressly, that this practice was "brought in *(paulatim) by little and little*." He asserts, with equal explicitness, that "Bishops are "above Presbyters, more by *the custom of the* "*Church*, than by the *appointment of Christ*." And finally, he asserts that this *departure* from the *primitive model*, owed its origin to the decay of religion, and especially to the ambition of Ministers. It commenced "When every one began to think "that those whom he baptized were rather *his* "than *Christ's*." I appeal to your candour, my

brethren, whether any thing can be plainer or more decisive than this language? I appeal to your candour, whether the man who is capable of saying that these are "obscure" and "doubtful" passages, can be safely trusted either as a discerning or an impartial judge.

Dr. *Bowden*, indeed, alleges, that these "obscure" passages from *Jerome* are more than counterbalanced by *others*, in which he avowedly maintains the Apostolical origin of Prelacy. But where are such passages to be found in that Father? Dr. B. has produced none of them; and until he does produce them, I must be excused for doubting their existence. He has brought forward, it is true, *seven* quotations, each of which he tells us is clear and pointed. But no person, it is presumed, excepting Dr. B. himself, can see the "clearness," or the "point" of any one of the number. *Jerome*, it seems, asserts, that "Without the Bi-"shop's command, neither Presbyter nor Deacon "has a right to baptize." He observes, "That "the Scriptures give the name of *Princes* to those "who should be *Bishops* of the Church." He styles *Polycarp*, *prince of Asia**; and asserts that

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" fore, the *Presbyters* know, that *by the custom of*
" *the Church* they are subject to him who is their
" *President*, so let *Bishops* know, that they are
" above *Presbyters* more by *the custom of the*
" *Church*, than by *any real appointment of Christ*."

In his epistle to *Evagrius*, he speaks in the same pointed language, asserting, and proving by the same quotations from Scripture, that in the beginning and during the Apostle's days, a *Bishop* and a *Presbyter* were the *same thing*. After having done this, he proceeds thus:—" As to the fact, that *af-*
" *terwards*, one was *elected* to preside over the rest,
" this was done as a remedy against schism; lest
" every one drawing his proselytes to himself,
" should rend the Church of Christ. For at *Alex-*
" *andria*, from *Mark* the Evangelist, to the Bishops
" *Heraclas* and *Dionysius*, the Presbyters always
" chose one of their number, placed him in a su-
" perior station, and gave him the title of *Bishop*.
" In the same manner as if any army should *make*
" an Emperor, or the Deacons should choose from
" among themselves, one whom they knew to be
" particularly active, and should call him *Arch-*
" *deacon*."

Dr. *Bowden*, and his friends, do not hesitate to acknowledge, that *Jerome* represents *some alteration* of the original constitution of the Church as having early taken place; but they insist that, according to him, this alteration took place during the *time*, and under the authority of the Apostles. Is

Dr. B. then prepared to adopt the opinion, that the inspired Apostles at first adopted a form of government, which in a little while, they found ill-judged, and insufficient to answer the purpose; and that they then altered it for a better? Yet if there is any meaning in part of his reasoning, this is the amount of it! But besides the blasphemy of the suggestion, *Jerome* could not have intended to say that this alteration took place during the times of the Apostles, because he quotes the Apostolical epistles to prove that it had not taken place at their date; and particularly in his epistle to *Evagrius*, he quotes the *second* and *third* epistles of *John* to show that Presbyterian parity existed when they were written, which was about *thirty years*, after the schism at *Corinth*, which Dr. *Bowden* asserts is the period assigned by *Jerome* for the rise of Prelacy. *Jerome* further tells us, that the practice of setting one of the Presbyters above the rest, was brought in *by degrees;* which could never have been the case had it been founded on a distinct and positive order of the Apostles. And, as if this were not sufficiently explicit, he adds, to take away all possibility of mistake, "Let the Presbyters know that they are subject to him who is "set over them *by the custom of the Church;* and "let the Bishops know, that they are greater than "Presbyters, rather *by the custom of the Church*, "than by any *real appointment of Christ.*"

If I were further to take up your time, brethren, in exposing the various attempts of Dr. *Bowden*

to set aside this plain and unequivocal testimony of *Jerome*, I should trespass on your patience, and insult your understandings. I have only to say, that some of the most learned and able advocates of Prelacy, as well as others, have understood *Jerome* as we understand him, and have confessed that he decisively maintains the Apostolic origin of Presbyterian parity. To establish this fact, the most pointed quotations might be adduced, almost without number. The few following will be sufficient.

The celebrated Episcopal Divine, Dr. *Saravia*, explicitly grants that *Jerome* was against the divine right of Episcopacy. "Jerome's opinion," says he, "was private, and coincided with that of *Aerius**."

The learned prelatist, *Alphonso de Castro* understood *Jerome* in the same manner. He sharply reproves a certain writer who had endeavoured to set aside the testimony commonly derived from that Father in favor of Presbytery, and insists that the testimony, as usually adduced, is correct. "But *Thomas Waldensis*," says he, "truly is deceived; for *Jerome does endeavour to prove* "that, according to *divine institution*, there was "*no difference* between *Presbyter* and *Bishop*." He afterwards adds, "Neither ought any one to "wonder that *Jerome*, though otherwise a most "learned and excellent man, was mistaken†."

* *De Gradibus Minist. Evangel.* Cap. 23.

† *Contra Hæres.* p. 103, 104.

Bishop *Jewel* understood *Jerome* as we do, and expressly quotes the passage which is commonly quoted by presbyterians, to show that this Father asserts the original *equality* and *identity* of *Bishops* and *Presbyters**.

Bishop *Morton* interprets *Jerome* in the same manner. He expressly acknowledges that *Jerome* represents the difference between Bishop and Presbyter as brought into the church not by *divine*, but *human* authority. He further asserts, that there was no substantial difference, on the subject of Episcopacy, between *Jerome* and *Aerius*. And further, that not only *all the Protestants*, but also *all the primitive Doctors* were of the same mind with *Jerome*†.

The learned Episcopalian, Professor *Whitaker*, concured in this interpretation. "If *Aerius*," says he, "was a heretic in this point, he had *Jerome* to "be his neighbour in that heresy; and not only "him, but other Fathers, both *Greek* and *Latin*, "as is confessed by *Medina*. *Aerius* thought that "Presbyter did not differ from Bishop by any di-"vine law and authority; and the same thing was "contended for by *Jerome*, and he defended it by "those very Scripture testimonies that *Aerius* did‡."

* *Defence* of his *Apology for the Church of England*, p. 248.

† *Cathol. Apolog.* Lib. i. p. 118—120.

‡ *Controv.* iv. *Quest.* i. *Cap.* iii. *Sect.* 30.

Few men have been more distinguished for their learned and zealous labours in favour of Episcopacy than Dr. *William Nichols*. Yet this eminent Episcopalian, speaking of *Jerome*, thus expresses himself. "At last came St. *Jerome*, though not "till above three centuries after the Apostles' "times, who valuing himself upon his learning, "which, indeed, was very great; and being pro- "voked by the insolence of some deacons, who "set themselves above Presbyters; to the end he "might maintain the dignity of his order against "such arrogant persons, he advanced a notion ne- "ver heard of before, viz. that Presbyters were "not a different order from Bishops; and that a "Bishop was only a more eminent Presbyter, cho- "sen out of the rest, and set over them, for pre- "venting of schism*."

Luther, whom some of our Episcopal brethren ignorantly claim as their own, in the *articles of Smalcald*, which he framed, expressly declares, that "*Jerome* teaches that the distinction of degrees "between a Bishop and a Presbyter, or Pastor, "was appointed only by *human authority*." This declaration was also formally subscribed by *Melancthon*. In the *Confession of Wirtemberg*, *Jerome* is interpreted in the same manner; and in the second *Helvetic Confession*, he is particularly quoted in support of the doctrine that in the primitive Church *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were the same. And, in a

* *Defence of the Doct. and Discip. of the Church of England* p. 241.

subsequent letter, you will find a number of other illustrious Divines, of different denominations, all concurring in the interpretation which we give of the learned Father.

I shall close my remarks on the testimony of *Jerome*, with the judgment of Bishop *Croft*, expressed in the following words—"And now I desire my reader, if he understands *Latin*, to view the epistle of St. *Jerome* to *Evagrius;* and doubtless he will wonder to see men have the confidence to quote any thing out of it for the *distinction* between *Episcopacy* and *Presbytery;* for the whole epistle is to show the *identity of them**."

I will not attempt to follow Dr. *Bowden* through all his tedious details of testimony from the Fathers of the *third*, *fourth*, and following centuries, and his still more tedious comments on that testimony. What if *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Origen*, *Hilary*, *Epiphanius*, *Augustine*, and a dozen more, who lived within the same period, could be brought to attest in the most unequivocal terms that prelacy existed in *their* time? Does any Presbyterian deny that clerical imparity had begun to appear in the *third*, and was established in the *fourth* century? But Dr. *Bowden* alleges that several of these writers expressly assert the *Apostolical institution* of Prelacy. Now if it were even true that they *do* make this assertion, it would weigh nothing with me,

* *Naked Truth*, p. 45.

nor with any other reasonable man. In this opinion every one must concur who seriously weighs the following facts.

Within fifty years after the Apostolic age, the *wine* in the Lord's Supper was constantly mixed with *water*. This mixture, considered, at first, as a measure of human prudence, soon began to be urged, not only as a matter of importance, but as a *divine institution*. *Irenæus* declares it to have been both taught and practised by our Saviour himself. Lib. iv. Cap. 57.—*Cyprian* also asserts that the same thing was enjoined by tradition from the Lord, and made a part of the original institution. Epist. 63. ad *Cæcil.* But no Protestant now believes either the one or the other. Administering the *Lord's Supper* to *infants* arose early in the Church. It is certain that this corruption existed in the *second* century. *Cyprian*, in the *third* century, speaks of it, not as a new thing, but as an ordinary practice. *De Lapsis*. Sect. 13. *Augustine* calls it an *Apostolical tradition*, represents it as a general custom, and expressly founds the propriety and necessity of it on *John* vi. 53. Now that this practice never had the least foundation either in Scripture or Apostolic example, our opponents, as well as ourselves, are fully agreed. Again; *Irenæus* positively asserts that Christ remained on earth until he had reached *old age;* that he was at least *fifty years* old when he was crucified; and that "this was ascertained by the unanimous tra-" dition, and positive testimony of all the old men

"who had lived with St. *John*, and the other "Apostles, from whom they all received this ac- "count, and constantly bore witness to the truth "of it." Lib. II. Cap. 39. But no one can open the Bible, without perceiving that this pretended fact, in behalf of which the authority of inspired men is quoted, is totally false. To mention only one case more; we learn from *Eusebius*, that, in the days of *Irenæus*, there arose a very fierce dispute respecting the proper time for the celebration of *Easter*. The Churches of *Asia* took one side; and the Western Churches, with *Victor*, Bishop of *Rome*, at their head, took the other. The former asserted, that they were supported by the authority of the Apostles *John* and *Phillip*. The latter, with equal confidence, plead the authority of *Peter* and *Paul* in justification of their practice. *Irenæus* addresed a lester to *Victor* on the subject, in which there is found the following passage. "This di- "versity did not begin in our time; but long ago "among our forefathers; who, as it seems, through "negligence in the management of their charge, "handed down to their posterity a custom which "through simplicity and ignorance had crept into "the Church*." And *Socrates*, the Ecclesiastical Historian, who wrote about a century after *Eusebius*, speaks of such observances generally in the following language. "Neither the ancients, nor "the moderns, who have studiously followed the

* *Euseb. Hist. Eccles.* Lib. v. Cap. 24.

were more thickly strewed in *Africa*, at that time, than at present in our own country; nor can we, by any means, suppose that the persecution in question prevailed through a district larger than the United States: yet I am persuaded we have not in the United States many more than *two thousand* regular clergymen of all denominations.

All that Dr. *Bowden* has to offer in opposition to this reasoning, is, that the "learned *Bingham*, in his *Antiquities of the Church*, has given a geographical description of the ancient Bishoprics, as first made toward the close of the *ninth* century;" and that, according to his representation, there is no difficulty in accounting for the number of Bishops found in the early councils.—To this testimony of *Bingham* I might offer many objections. The work which contains it, though apparently much respected by Dr. *Bowden*, is a work of great partiality, and little credit. The sources from which the author derived his information, are by no means such as ought to inspire the confidence of any reasonable man. And, how any mortal can with confidence determine, from arrangements made in the *ninth* century, what were those of the *third* and *fourth*, Dr. *Bowden* may be able to explain; I am not. But after all, what is the amount of *Bingham*'s testimony? It is that, even in the *ninth* century, many of the Bishops' dioceses were of very small extent, little, if any, larger than many of our modern parishes. And is not this precisely the position for which I contend, and on which this

and that the plea of Apostolical authority advanced by each, is equally and totally without foundation! Who, after such notorious instances of either credulity or dishonesty, would give the least credit to a claim of *Apostolical* institution, resting on no other ground than the assertion of the Fathers? Could we find in them, therefore, the most direct and decisive claim of this kind, in behalf of diocesan Episcopacy, it would be unworthy of confidence.

But it is not true that any one of the Fathers, within the *first four centuries*, does assert the Apostolical institution of Prelacy. Dr. *Bowden* produces *Cyprian* as saying, that "Jesus Christ and he alone "has the power of setting Bishops over the Church "to govern it;" that "Christ *constitutes* as well "as protects Bishops;" and that "it is by *divine* "*appointment* a Bishop is set over the Church." He produces *Origen*, as saying, "Shall I not be "subject to the Bishop who is *of God ordained* to "be my father? Shall not I be subject to the "Presbyter, who is, by *divine vouchsafement*, set "over me?" He quotes *Hilary* as declaring, "The "Bishop is the chief; though every Bishop is a "Presbyter, yet every Presbyter is not a Bishop." And also as asserting, that *James*, and *Timothy*, and *Titus*, and the *Angels* of the *Asiatic* Churches were Bishops. He cites *Athanasius* as remonstrating with one who declined a Bishopric, in the following terms—"If you think there is no reward "allotted to the office of a Bishop, you despise the "*Saviour who instituted* that office." He repre-

sents *Chrysostom*, as commenting on 1 *Tim.* iv. 4. in these words—" *Paul* does not speak of *Presby-* " *ters*, but of *Bishops*, for Presbyters did not or- " dain *Timothy* a Bishop." And finally he produces the Fathers of the Council of *Antioch*, in the year 265, as declaring, that " the office of a Bishop " is *sacred* and exemplary, both to the clergy and " to the people." Now, is it possible that Dr. *Bowden*, after devoting the best powers of his mind, for thirty years, to this controversy, has yet to learn, that all these quotations, and ten thousand more like them, are nothing to his purpose? It is truly amazing! Have not I, who am a Presbyterian, repeatedly said, in the foregoing sheets, that " *Bishops* were, by divine appointment, set over the Church?" Do not Presbyterians perpetually speak of the office of Bishop in their Church as a " sacred office?" And would any Presbyterian on earth scruple to say, that Bishops *were*, and *are* ordained of God to be set over the Church; and also that every member of their flock, and even *assistant preachers*, within their parish, if not invested with a share in the *pastoral charge*, are bound to be " subject to them?" But no one, surely, could construe these expressions, on our part, as implying that we believed in the divine institution of *such Bishops* as our Episcopal brethren contend for. The truth is, these quotations, so pompously made, only prove two points; *First*, that the *Fathers* in question believed that there were Bishops in the Apostolic Church; which no man, in his senses, ever doubt-

ed: and *Secondly*, that *at the time when they wrote*, Bishops were considered as having some kind of superiority over common Presbyters; which is as little doubted as the former. In short, Dr. *Bowden* is deceived by the bare occurrence of the word *Bishop*. Whenever he finds this word in the writings of the Fathers, his imagination is instantly filled with *Prelates*, and with all the peculiarities of the Episcopal system. But before the smallest touch of inquiry this hallucination vanishes. Though Bishops in the third and fourth centuries, had appropriated to themselves powers, which before had been enjoyed by others in common with them; yet their office itself was of divine appointment. Dr. *Bowden*, indeed, says, and endeavours to persuade his readers, that the writers whom he quotes, declare the Bishops which existed in the days of the Apostles to have been just *such Bishops*, as existed several centuries afterwards, in their own times—Bishops in the *prelatical* sense of the word. But the Doctor, with all his confidence, must pardon me for saying, this is not true. He has produced no passage which makes any such declaration, or which legitimately implies it; nor is he able to produce such a passage, from all the stores of antiquity, within the specified limits.

Besides the direct quotations from the Fathers, which prove that the primitive Bishop was the Pastor of a single congregation, I mentioned, in my former Letters, some *facts*, incidentally stated by early writers, which serve remarkably to confirm

the same truth. Dr. *Bowden* treats these alleged facts with great contempt, and endeavours to show that they are all either unfounded, or nothing to the purpose. I do not think it necessary to go over this part of the ground again. Of the *five* facts mentioned by me and assailed by Dr. B. there are only *two* of which it appears proper to take any further notice.

The *first* of these is, the GREAT NUMBER of Bishops which ecclesiastical historians inform us were found, in early periods of the Church, within small districts of country. Suppose a man in *Europe* were to be told, that there are, at this time, within the State of *New-York*, TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY Bishops. What would be his conclusion? Why, certainly, that these could not be *such* Bishops as are found in any church in which *diocesan* Episcopacy is established. And if he were immediately afterwards informed that, within the whole State, there are only about *two hundred and fifty* organized congregations, he would confidently infer that there must be a Bishop *in every congrègation*, and, therefore, that the title *Bishop* was considered as synonymous with that of *Pastor* of a single Church. This is precisely my argument in the present case. When we find in *Provincial* synods, in early times, *several hundred* Bishops convened; when we find, upon enquiry, that these Bishops and their Bishoprics were all embraced in districts of country not much, if at all more extensive than the State of *New-York;* and when we have reason further to

conclude that many parts, even of these districts, were not subjected to the empire of Christianity; what must be our conclusion? Unquestionably, that which has been just mentioned. These Bishops could have been no other than parish *Rectors*, or *Pastors;* and the fact goes far toward corroborating the doctrine in support of which it was produced, viz. that *primitive* Episcopacy was *parochial*, and not *diocesan.*

Dr. *Bowden* does not deny that, in the council of *Antioch*, in the third century, there were upwards of *six hundred* Bishops. He does not deny that there were present at a *Provincial* synod, in *Africa*, in the time of *Augustine*, between *five and six hundred* Bishops. Neither does he deny, that about the same time, according to *Victor Uticensis*, from that part of *Africa* in which the *Vandalic persecution* raged, *six hundred and sixty* Bishops fled, besides the *great number* that were murdered and imprisoned, and *many more* who were tolerated. Now when it is recollected that this persecution extended only to a small portion of *Africa*, and that it was carried on by one denomination of professing Christians against another, we are necessarily led to conclude that there must have been in that section of *Africa* alone, at least *two thousand* Bishops. Could these have been *Prelates*, each with a number of congregations and Pastors under his care? It is incredible. They could not have been more than the ordinary Pastors of single congregations. It is not likely that organized Churches

were more thickly strewed in *Africa*, at that time, than at present in our own country; nor can we, by any means, suppose that the persecution in question prevailed through a district larger than the United States: yet I am persuaded we have not in the United States many more than *two thousand* regular clergymen of all denominations.

All that Dr. *Bowden* has to offer in opposition to this reasoning, is, that the "learned *Bingham*, in his *Antiquities of the Church*, has given a geographical description of the ancient Bishoprics, as first made toward the close of the *ninth* century;" and that, according to his representation, there is no difficulty in accounting for the number of Bishops found in the early councils.—To this testimony of *Bingham* I might offer many objections. The work which contains it, though apparently much respected by Dr. *Bowden*, is a work of great partiality, and little credit. The sources from which the author derived his information, are by no means such as ought to inspire the confidence of any reasonable man. And, how any mortal can with confidence determine, from arrangements made in the *ninth* century, what were those of the *third* and *fourth*, Dr. *Bowden* may be able to explain; I am not. But after all, what is the amount of *Bingham*'s testimony? It is that, even in the *ninth* century, many of the Bishops' dioceses were of very small extent, little, if any, larger than many of our modern parishes. And is not this precisely the position for which I contend, and on which this

whole argument is founded? Besides, if Bishoprics were thus small in the *ninth* century, have we not abundant proof that they were smaller still, in the *third* and *fourth* centuries, when it is certain that Bishops were more numerous than they were several hundred years afterwards? But this is not the only instance in which Dr. *Bowden* unwittingly betrays his own cause, and supports the Presbyterian doctrine.

But, with respect to the *African* Bishoprics, Dr. *Bowden*, following his suspicious guide, *Bingham*, takes a ground somewhat different. He asserts, that "in the whole extent of that country, from the "borders of *Egypt* to the western part of the pe-"ninsula, comprehending a length of 2360 miles, "and a breadth in some places of 200, in others "of 500 miles, there were but 466 dioceses; as "appears, he adds, from the *Collation of Carthage*, "the *Abstract of St. Austin*, and the *Notitia of the* "*African Church*, made about fifty years after *Aus-*"*tin*'s death, and published by *Sirmondus*." On this statement I shall make no remark; but shall leave it, to be treated as it deserves, by those who recollect the account given by *Victor Uticensis* of the number of Bishops banished, murdered, &c. during the *Vandalic persecution;* and also the numbers of Bishops actually convened in *provincial* synods, about the same time.

As another signal instance of the *number* of Bishops found in early times, I mentioned that *Patrick*, the Apostle of *Ireland*, who went thither about the

year 432, founded in that island 365 Churches, and ordained over them the *same number* of Bishops; and also ordained for these Churches 3000 Elders. These facts I represented as resting on the authority of archbishop *Usher*, and other eccesiastical historians. Dr. *Bowden* utterly denies that *Usher* says this, or "any thing like it." Has the Doctor ever read *Usher's* work on the *Antiquities of the British Churches?* In that work, in pages 491 and and 492*, if he does not find the learned author quoting with apparent approbation, several respectable antecedent historians, all of whom expressly state the facts which I have mentioned concerning *Patrick*, he must read with eyes very different from those of most other men.

But Dr. *Bowden* endeavours to turn this whole account into ridicule. "We have," says he, "according to this story, St. *Patrick*, who lived in "the *fifth* century, when all our adversaries acknowledge that *diocesan* Episcopacy was universal, and who was also made a Bishop of that kind "by Pope *Celestine*, converting the *Irish*, and "planting among them *Presbyterian parity*." Did I any where assert that *Patrick* established *Presbyterian parity?* Was it not my object to prove, that the *primitive* extent of a Bishop's charge was a *single flock;* and that this plan continued to be realized in *some* parts of the Christian world, even after

* *Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates.* Fol. *Edit. Secund.* 1687.

Prelacy had been firmly and generally established? He who cannot understand how the statement concerning *Patrick* may be admitted, consistently with the doctrine of my Letters, has reason to suspect that the fault lies, not in the doctrine itself, nor in its advocate, but in some other quarter.

As another fact, illustrative of the *number* of Bishops found in early times, I mentioned, "that "*Dalmatius*, Bishop of *Cyzicum*, who assisted "at the general council of *Ephesus*, against the "*Nestorians*, told the Emperor that there were *six* "*thousand* Bishops in that council, who opposed "*Nestorius*." In this statement I acknowledge myself to have fallen into a mistake; a mistake which I had discovered and regretted long before Dr. *Bowden*'s volumes made their appearance. The fact, as it ought to have stood, is this; "*Dal-* "*matius* told the Emperor, that one of the metro- "politans who attended the general council of "*Ephesus*, had *six thousand* Bishops under him, "who were all against *Nestorius*." This fact I found recorded in *Baxter's Treatise on Episcopacy*, *Part.* II. p. 38. And he quotes as his authority for it the learned *Binnius*, *in Concil. Ephes.* I. *Tom.* II. *Cap.* 20. In hastily reading a sentence of unusual structure, I was so unfortunate as to receive an erroneous impression from it, which, though a candid reader, in reviewing the sentence for himself, would at once find reason to excuse, I am still glad of an opportunity to acknowledge and explain. But while I confess my mistake, it is plain that the

fact as it really stands is quite as much in my favour, as my erroneous statement, if true, would have been: or rather the fact of one *metropolitan* having within his district *six thousand* Bishops, is even a stronger testimony in support of my principle. The fidelity of the quotation will scarcely be doubted. For although I have never been able to procure the work of *Binnius* which is here quoted; yet being confident that *Richard Baxter* had *read* more books than many of those who affect to despise him ever *saw*, I have no fear of leading you astray in trusting to his citations. As to Dr. B.'s objection to the truth of this account, that *he* never before heard of *Dalmatius*; and that he is not able to find his name either in *Cave* or *Mosheim*, it is to be sure a real difficulty! How it is to be surmounted, is a very serious question! But I much fear that this objection, if admitted in general, would blot out of existence the names and writings of some of the best men that have ever adorned the Christian Church.

The next *fact* which I think it my duty further to notice, is, that in early times, it was customary for the *flock* of which the Bishop was to have the charge, to *meet together* for the purpose of *electing* him; and that he was always *ordained in their presence*. This was mentioned as another consideration which evinces that primitive Episcopacy was *parochial*, and not *diocesan*. Dr. *Bowden* denies the fact. He declares that there are no traces of *the popular* election of Bishops during the first *two*

hundred years after Christ; and that so far as this practice *ever* prevailed, it arose in the *third* century, but was soon laid aside. In reply to these bold assertions, I shall only present the following quotation from *Cyprian*, Doctor *Bowden*'s favourite authority. *Epist.* 67. "Wherefore a people who "would obey the rules of the gospel should separate themselves from a sinful Bishop, and should "not partake with a profane priest in his sacrifices; especially since the CHIEF POWER of choosing worthy priests, and of rejecting unworthy "ones, is lodged with *them*: which rule we see "*proceeded originally from God's authority*, that "a Bishop should be chosen in the presence of "the people, in the most public manner, and be "approved as worthy by the common suffrage of "the whole body. God directs his priest to be "made so before all the congregation; and thereby shows us, that he would not have the ordinations of his bishops performed, but in the presence, and with the privity of the people. This "rule, thus *appointed by God*, we find afterwards "observed in the *Acts* of the Apostles, when *Peter* spoke to the people, upon the point of substituting some one to be an Apostle, in the room "of *Judas*. Nor do we find the Apostles observing this rule in the case of Bishops and Priests "only, but even in the ordination of *Deacons;* "concerning which it is recorded in *Acts*, vi. 2. "*Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, Look ye out seven men of*

year 432, founded in that island 365 Churches, and ordained over them the *same number* of Bishops; and also ordained for these Churches 3000 Elders. These facts I represented as resting on the authority of archbishop *Usher*, and other eccesiastical historians. Dr. *Bowden* utterly denies that *Usher* says this, or "any thing like it." Has the Doctor ever read *Usher's* work on the *Antiquities of the British Churches?* In that work, in pages 491 and and 492*, if he does not find the learned author quoting with apparent approbation, several respectable antecedent historians, all of whom expressly state the facts which I have mentioned concerning *Patrick*, he must read with eyes very different from those of most other men.

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unequivocal, he represents the election in question as of the same nature with that of the *Deacons*, in *Acts* vi. 2, 3, &c. in which it is expresly asserted, that the *whole multitude*, or the *body of the people*, made the choice*. If this is not testimony that the method of popular election was practised in the days of *Cyprian;* and that that Father considered it as of divine appointment, and as having been received in the Church from the days of the Apostles, then I know not how to understand or interpret his language. Dr. *Bowden* gives only a *part* of the above extract from *Cyprian;* and endeavours to prove from it that an actual election by the people is not at all intended. I trust, however, that of this gloss, on further consideration, he will be ashamed.

Having thus, with all possible brevity, replied to such of Dr. *Bowden*'s strictures as appeared worthy of notice, I shall select a few additional testimonies from the Fathers, and request you to give them your serious attention.

Hilary, in his commentary on 1 *Timothy* iii. affirms "The ordination of Bishop and Presbyter is

* It ought to be recollected, that the Epistle from which the above extract is taken, was written to some people in *Spain*, who wished advice in a case in which the right of the people to choose their own Bishop was immediately concerned; and that it was written not in the name of *Cyprian* only, but in that of the *African* Synod.

fact as it really stands is quite as much in my favour, as my erroneous statement, if true, would have been: or rather the fact of one *metropolitan* having within his district *six thousand* Bishops, is even a stronger testimony in support of my principle. The fidelity of the quotation will scarcely be doubted. For although I have never been able to procure the work of *Binnius* which is here quoted; yet being confident that *Richard Baxter* had *read* more books than many of those who affect to despise him ever *saw*, I have no fear of leading you astray in trusting to his citations. As to Dr. B.'s objection to the truth of this account, that *he* never before heard of *Dalmatius*; and that he is not able to find his name either in *Cave* or *Mosheim*, it is to be sure a real difficulty! How it is to be surmounted, is a very serious question! But I much fear that this objection, if admitted in general, would blot out of existence the names and writings of some of the best men that have ever adorned the Christian Church.

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In the *Apostolical Constitutions* the following passages are found, which Dr. *Bowden* is bound, on his own principles, to respect, and admit. *Lib.* II. *Cap.* 27. "It behoves you, brethren, to bring your "sacrifices and oblations to the Bishop, as to the "high priest, and offer them, either by yourselves, "or by the Deacons. Offer the Bishop also your "first fruits and tythes, and your voluntary gifts; "for he knows the poor, and gives to every one "what is convenient; lest one receive twice or oftener the same day, or the same week, and another receive not so much as once." *Cap.* 31. "The Deacon must give nothing to any poor man "without the Bishop's knowledge and consent." *Cap.* 44. "The *Deacon* must be the Bishop's eye, "and ear, and mouth, nay, his heart and soul, that "the Bishop may be only taken up with the weightier affairs of his flock." Here it is evident that the business of the *Deacons* was to take care of the *poor*. This is exactly the doctrine of the Presbyterians, and, what is much more important, of the New Testament. Here it is evident, also, that no poor man was to be relieved without the knowledge and approbation of the Bishop; who, it is expressly said, is presumed to know all the poor, and to be able to give to every one what is convenient. Could this officer have been any other than the Pastor of a single flock?

Again; the same *Apostolical Constitutions* thus describe the ordinary solemnities of public worship. *Lib.* II. *Cap.* 57. "When thou, O Bishop, hast

" called together the Church of God, like the mas-
" ter of a ship, require them to assemble often,
" with all prudence and regularity of discipline.
" Command the *Deacons*, as so many mariners,
" that they appoint convenient places for all the
" brethren, as for so many passengers, with all care
" and decency. And first let the house of worship
" be oblong, turned toward the east, having seats
" (or *pews*) on both sides, towards the east, and
" like a ship. In the middle place let the *Bishop*'s
" seat be; and on both sides of him let the *Pres-*
" *byters* sit. But let the *Deacons* stand ready for
" service, lightly clothed, for they are like the ma-
" riners, and those that order the sides of the ship.
" By *their* care, let the *laymen* sit quietly and or-
" derly in one part of the Church: and the women
" also by themselves, abstaining from talking. Let
" the Reader, standing in the middle, in some high
" place, read the Books of *Moses*, &c. The read-
" ing being finished, let another sing the hymns of
" *David*. Then let our *Acts* (i. e. the *Acts of the*
" *Apostles*) and the *Epistles*, be recited. After
" these things let the *Presbyters* exhort the peo-
" ple; and last of all the *Bishop*, who is like the
" master of the ship. Let the *Door-keepers* stand
" at the Church doors, where the men enter; and
" the *Deaconesses* where the women enter. If
" any be found sitting out of his own place, let the
" Deacon reprove him, and let him be conducted
" to a proper place. Let the Deacons take care
" that none whisper, sleep, laugh, nod, &c. After

" the catechumens and penitents have retired, let " the Deacons prepare for the celebration of the " *Eucharist, &c.*"

No one can read these rules without perceiving that they relate to the *ordinary worship* of Christian assemblies, when convened on the sabbath. To doubt this, is to fly in the face of common sense. Yet we find the presence of the Bishop, in every public service, spoken of as indispensable. Is it not manifest, then, that this Bishop could only have been the Pastor of a single flock?

The sixth General Council of *Constantinople*, which was held about the year 692, acknowledged the " Scripture Deacons to be no other than *over-* " *seers of the poor;* and that this was the opinion " of the ancient Fathers." *Can.* 16. Here is another explicit acknowledgment, that the Apostolic constitution of the Church, as to her officers, was notoriously changed, prior to the year 692.

The Council of *Aix la Chapelle*, held about the year 816, in the most unequivocal terms owned the original identity of Bishops and Presbyters, and expressly declared, that " the ordination of the " clergy was reserved to the high-priest only for " the maintenance of his dignity." *Can.* 8. Could this form of expression have been thought correct if Presbyters were, by divine right, destitute of the power of ordaining? Certainly not.

Some other facts, which are ascertained from the writings of the Fathers, and which were mentioned in my former Letters, deserve further considera-

tion. We are informed, by several early writers, that the *Bishops*, during the first three centuries, were alone considered as authorized to administer *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*. From *Ignatius*, *Tertullian*, and *Cyprian*, we learn that Christians, in those days, received the *Eucharist* from no hands but those of the Bishop; and that *Baptism* was considered as his *appropriate* work, and never to be administered by any other hands, unless in cases of necessity. Again, in the 30th Canon of the Council of *Agatha*, it is said—"It shall not be "lawful for a Presbyter in the Church to pronounce "the benediction on the people, or to bless a peni-"tent." Now, when it is notorious, that, in those days, the *Lord's Supper* was administered every sabbath, and in some Churches oftener; when cases of *Baptism* doubtless continually occurred; and when pronouncing the benediction on the people made, then, as well as now, a part of every public service; it is plain that the presence of a Bishop was considered as indispensable, every Lord's day, in every worshipping assembly. Is it not evident, when this was the case, that the Bishop could have been nothing less or more than the *Pastor* of a *single Church?*

Dr. *Bowden* does not attempt to deny the *facts* here alleged. They are, indeed, so abundantly confirmed by the voice of antiquity, that he cannot possibly call them in question. But he endeavours to evade their force by saying, that these writers only mean in general to represent the Bishop

as the fountain of all ecclesiastical power; and to assert that none have a right to administer the ordinances of religion, excepting those who are empowered by him. And, in like manner, and on the same principle, he intimates, that the Presbyters in the Episcopal Church, baptize and administer the Eucharist in virtue of permission given them by the Bishop for that purpose. This is an evasion unworthy of Dr. B.'s understanding and gravity. The writers above quoted, undoubtedly convey the idea, that administering *Baptism* and the sacrament of the *Lord's Supper* was the *appropriate* and *peculiar* work of the Bishop as such; that in cases of *necessity* only they might commit these ordinances to other hands; but that for *every such dispensation* there must be a distinct expression of the Bishop's will, and his leave expressly obtained. In short, the idea evidently meant to be conveyed is, that certain acts could be done *regularly* by the Bishop *only;* but that in cases of sickness, necessary absence, &c. he might empower some one to perform them *as his substitute;* just as, among Presbyterians, the administration of sealing ordinances is considered as the appropriate duty of each Pastor within his parish; though at the same time, if he have an *assistant*, or if any other ordained minister happen to be present, the Pastor may, without transgressing any ecclesiastical law, request him to officiate in his room: it being always remembered, however, that for *every such act*, a *new* request, and a *new* permission, on the part of the Pastor, are ne-

cessary. But does this bear any resemblance to the Episcopal system, in which Baptism and the Lord's Supper are in no degree the appropriated duty of a Prelate; but according to which every Presbyter, whether he have the charge of a congregation or not, is considered as possessing, in virtue of his general commission, a right to administer both the sacraments, at all times, and in all places, without consulting his Bishop? I am astonished that Dr. *Bowden* could so far impose on himself as to imagine that there is any resemblance between the two cases.

After all, then, that Dr. *Bowden* has urged against my exhibition of the testimony of the Fathers, it appears that he has not succeeded in setting aside a single material fact, or in refuting a single important argument, which I had deduced from the works of those early writers.

It appears, that the titles, *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, were promiscuously applied to the same persons, not only in the Apostolic age, but also till the close of the *second* century. This Dr. *Bowden* himself acknowledges; though he asserts, at the same time, that in the second century, it was *seldom* so applied. Now if the interchangeable application of these terms was continued until that time, and afterwards does not occur, must we not conclude, that *about*, or immediately *after* that time, some *change* took place in the arrangement of ecclesiastical dignities, which led to a more restricted use of the

word *Bishop?* No supposition can be more natural; and it is precisely this for which we contend.

It appears, that Dr. *Bowden* has not produced, and cannot produce, a single sentence, from any writer within the first two hundred years, which gives the least hint that *Ordination* or *Confirmation* was in *fact* confined to a particular order of Prelates, or was considered as a rite which *ought* to be so confined.

It appears, that *Presbyters* are expressly represented by early writers, and particularly by *Ignatius* and *Irenæus*, as the *successors of the Apostles*, and as *presiding* over the Church.

It appears, that in *every worshipping assembly*, in the primitive church, the presence of a Bishop was considered as indispensable. That it was the Bishop's peculiar duty to preach, and to bless the people; to administer Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; to attend to the case of every *poor person* in his parish that needed relief; to celebrate, or give his personal consent to the celebration, of all marriages among the people of his charge; to visit the sick; to instruct the children of his flock statedly every week; and, in short, to perform all those duties whch are now, and ever have been considered, as the proper work of a parish minister.

It appears, after all that has been said to the contrary, that the *number of Bishops* found, in early times, in small districts of country, precludes the

idea of their having been any other than parish ministers.

It appears, that, even after a kind of Prelacy arose, the Bishops were still, for the most part, only Pastors of single congregations; and that there was little, if any other difference between them and their Presbyters, than that which now subsists between *Pastors* and their *Assistants*, in Presbyterian Churches, and *Rectors* and their *Curates*, in Episcopal Churches.

It appears that *Jerome*, after all the unwearied pains which have been taken by high-church-men, to set aside his testimony, does explicitly declare, that *Presbyterian parity* was the *Apostolic* and *primitive* form of Church government; and that this form was *afterwards*, and *gradually* exchanged for *Prelacy*. And it is evident, moreover, that some of the most learned and zealous Episcopal Divines have so understood him.

It appears from *Jerome*, that the first approach towards Prelacy was the standing *moderatorship* of one of the Presbyters; that this began in the Church of *Alexandria* very early; soon, if not immediately after the days of *Mark* the Evangelist; and that this was the only kind of clerical imparity that existed in that Church until the middle of the third century, when it gave place to some higher encroachments of ecclesiastical ambition.

It appears from several unexceptionable testimonies, that *Deacons* in the primitive Church, were not an order of Clergy at all; that they were only

entrusted with the care of the *poor*, and employed to assist in the administration of the *Lord's Supper*, as in the Presbyterian Church at present; and that their gradually coming to be considered as a third order of Clergy, was, like the claims of the Prelates, an innovation.

It appears, from the declaration of several Fathers, besides *Jerome*, that *some change* in the powers and prerogatives of Bishops, did *actually* take place, within the first three centuries; and that several things were *appropriated* to Bishops in the *third* and *fourth* centuries, which those writers assert were *not appropriated* to them in the *Apostolic* age*.

Finally, it appears, from all that has been said, that the writings of the Fathers, instead of speak-

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"teach. Amongst other powers and abilities "which God hath given to his Servants, he hath "given authority to choose leaders, to rule the peo- "ple, and to ordain Elders in their charges.— "When any of us, the aforesaid Pastors, falls "into any gross sins, he is both excommunicated, "and prohibited to preach." Art. 4. "Our *Pas-* "*tors* do call assemblies once every year, to deter- "mine of all affairs in a general Synod*."

In another *Confession of Faith*, drawn up about the year 1220, they declare that the functions of *Ministers* consist in "preaching the word and administering sacraments," and that "all other ministerial things may be reduced to the aforesaid." Speaking of the rite of *Confirmation*, and of the Popish claims that it must be administered by a *Bishop*, they assert, that "it has *no ground at all in* "*Scripture;* that it was introduced by the *Devil's* "*instigation*, to seduce the people; that by such "means they might be induced the more to be- "lieve the ceremonies, and the *necessity* of the "*Bishops*†."

In the same work, (chap. 4.) it is expressly and repeatedly asserted, that the Synods of the *Waldenses* were composed of *Ministers* and *Elders*. This mode of speaking is surely not *Episcopal*.

The same historian tells us, that *Waldo*, (from whose name that of the *Waldenses* is said to be deriv-

* PERRIN'S *History of the Old Waldenses*, Part II. Book V. Chap. 7.

† *Ibid.* Chap. 8.

ed,) " upon his departure from *Lyons*, came into " *Dauphiny*, and thence, having erected some " Churches, and laid the foundation of those which " have been miraculously preserved there to this " day, he went into *Languedoc*, and left some nota- " ble *Pastors* there, who set up and governed those " Churches, which afterwards cost the Pope and " his clergy so much pains to destroy*." Now it is certain that *Waldo* himself was no Prelate; neither can we suppose that the *Pastors* whom he left in *Languedoc*, were Prelates. Yet these *Pastors set up and governed Churches.*

In perfect coincidence with all this, is the testimony of *Gillis*, in his *History of the Waldenses.* This writer, like *Perrin*, was one of the Pastors of that people, and therefore perfectly qualified to give an account of their peculiar doctrines and practices. He speaks familiarly of the *Pastors* of their Churches, in the Presbyterian style. He says, " These *Pastors*, in their ordinary assemblies, " came together and held a Synod once a year, and " most generally in the month of *September*, at " which they examined the Students, and *admitted* " *them to the ministry.*" Chap. II. p. 12.

In their *Confession of Faith*, which *Gillis* inserts at length, in the " Addition" to his work, p. 490, and which he expressly informs us was the confession of the *ancient* as well as the *modern Waldenses*; in *Article* 31, they declare, " It is necessary for the

* *Part* II. *Book* II. *Chap.* 9.

" Church to have *Pastors* esteemed sufficiently " learned, and exemplary in their conduct, as well " to preach God's word, as to administer the sa- " craments, and watch over the sheep of Jesus " Christ, together with the *Elders* and *Deacons*, " according to the rules of good and holy Church " discipline, and the practice of the primitive " Church."

Here is better testimony than *Thuanus* or *Walsingham*, than *Mosheim* or *Allix*. Here are the declarations of the *Waldenses* themselves. And I will venture to say that there is not a syllable in the above extracts which has the most distant appearance of Prelacy. On the contrary, they all bear the most decisive indications of Presbyterian parity. But besides this, *Bellarmine* acknowledges that the *Waldenses* denied the divine right of Prelacy. *Medina*, in the council of *Trent*, declared that the *Waldenses* were of the same mind with *Aerius* on this subject. And the learned Episcopalian, Professor *Raignolds*, in his famous Letter to Sir *Francis Knollys*, asserts, that the *Waldenses*, and all others who had distinguished themselves as opposers of Popery, and as Reformers of the Church, for 500 years, prior to the *seventeenth century*, had uniformly taught that " all *Pastors*, " whether styled *Bishops* or *Priests*, have one and " the same authority by the word of God."

Dr. *Bowden* also insists, in opposition to my statement, that the *Bohemian* Churches were Episcopal, in his sense of the word. In this, however,

as in the former case, he is contradicted by the most unquestionable testimony. In their *Confession*, there is not only a profound silence as to any distinction or difference of degrees among Pastors; but, what is more decisive, they place *ordination*, and excommunication, as well as preaching the gospel, not in the power of one, but in the hands of *Presbyters* and *Brethren* of the ministry. And in their *Book of Order*, or *Discipline*, p. 20. we have the following express words. "It is true, the *Bo-* "*hemians* have certain *Bishops*, or *Superintendents*, "who are conspicuous for age and gifts; and cho- "sen by the suffrages of all the ministers, for the "keeping of order, and to see that all the rest do "their office. Four, or five, or six such have they, "as need requires; and each of these has his dio- "cese. But the dignity of these above other mi- "nisters, is not founded in the *prerogative* of *ho-* "*nours* or *revenues*, but of *labours* and *cares* for "others. And, *according to the Apostles' rules*, a "Presbyter and Bishop are *one and the same* "*thing*." But it is to be presumed that Dr. *Bowden* will not doubt a moment longer, when he is told, that even his own favourite high-church historian. Dr. *Heylin*, explicitly grants that the *Bohemian* Churches were not Episcopal, either in principle or practice. In his *History of the Presbyterians*, p. 409, 410. there is the following decisive passage. "About the year 1400, we find a strong "party to be raised amongst the *Bohemians*, against "some superstitions and corruptions in the Church

" of *Rome;* occasioned, as some say, by reading " the works of *Wickliffe*, and by the diligence of " *Picardus*, a Fleming, as is affirmed by some " others, from whom they had the name of *Pi-* " *cards.* Cruelly persecuted by their own kings, " and publicly condemned in the Council of *Con-* " *stance*, they continued constant, notwithstanding, " to their own persuasions. In this condition they " remained till the preaching of *Luther*, and the " receiving of the *Augustan Confession* in most " parts of the empire, which gave them so much " confidence as to purge themselves from all for- " mer calumnies, by publishing a declaration of " their faith and doctrine; which they presented " at *Vienna* to the Archduke *Ferdinand*, about " ten years before chosen king of *Bohemia;* to- " gether with a large apology prefixed before it. " By which *Confession* it appears that they ascribe " no power to the civil magistrate in the concern- " ments of the Church; that they *had fallen upon* " *a way of ordaining ministers amongst themselves,* " *without recourse unto the Bishop, or any such su-* " *perior officer as a superintendent;* and finally, " that they retained the use of excommunication, " and other ecclesiastical censures, for the chasti- " sing of irregular and scandalous persons."

As to the observations made by Dr. *Bowden*, and his clerical friend in *Philadelphia*, on the testimony of *Thuanus*, *Enæas Sylvius*, and *Walsingham*, respecting the *Waldenses* and the *Bohemian Brethren*, I consider them as unworthy of notice. It would

be easy for me to show, that these writers really say what I ascribe to them; and that they are entitled to credit. It would also be easy to produce passages from *Alphonso de Castro*, *Voetius*, and other learned writers, who, in the most positive terms, give the same account of those celebrated witnesses for the truth. But it is unnecessary. The authority of their own historians and Confessions of Faith is paramount to every other*.

Dr. *Bowden* does not deny that *Wickliffe* held the doctrine of Presbyterian parity. But in order to diminish the weight of this fact, he endeavours to destroy the character of that illustrious Reformer, by repeating the accusations brought against him by some virulent *Papists*. I must say that I expected more *prudence*, if not more *consistency*, from this gentleman. It is really astonishing to find a Protestant Divine so often obliged to avail himself of the arguments, the cavils, and even the

* Among the few gratifications which this controversy has afforded me, none of the least is, that it has led me to peruse, with particular care, the *History* and the *Confessions* of the *Waldenses*, who are allowed, by all Protestants, to have been the purest part of the Christian Church during the dark ages. Their coincidence with our Church, in almost all respects, both of doctrine and discipline, is really remarkable. Our *Baptist* brethren, among other advocates of error, have sometimes ventured to assert, with confidence, that the *Waldenses* were *Anti-pædobaptists*. I take for granted that those who have made this assertion, never read the ancient *Confessions* of that celebrated people. In those Confessions, and other authentic documents concerning them, the *Pædobaptist* doctrine is unequivocally and strongly maintained.

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same ground, with even greater warmth, and with much acrimonious remark. On this point, my observations shall be few and short.

Dr. *Bowden*, in many of his statements concerning the Reformation in *England*, avowedly relies on the authority of *Heylin* and *Collier*. With respect to these writers, I think proper, once for all, to declare, that I place no reliance either on the candour or the truth of their representations. And of course that no alleged fact, which does not rest on some other testimony, will be acknowledged by me. The learned and able Editors of the *Christian Observer*, who, as was before observed, are warm *Episcopalians*, speak of these writers in the following manner: "Mr. Daubeny," say they, "in "many of his references to historical facts, and in "the deductions made from them, professedly follows authorities of a highly exceptionable nature. "Every reader who is conversant with the present "subject of debate, knows how forcibly this remark applies to the writings of *Collier* and *Heylin*. "We speak from a careful comparison of what "they have written, with the sources from which "they drew, or might have drawn their materials "—when we affirm, that in all matters immediately bearing upon the *Calvinistic* controversy, they "are most *unsafe guides*. Of Dr. *Heylin*, in particular, we have no hesitation in saying, that we do "not know of any author, ancient or modern, in "whose pages is to be found a larger portion of "false reasonings, incorrect statements, and pal-

" pable misrepresentations*." Bishop *Burnet*, in the preface to his *History of the Reformation*, declares, " Either *Heylin* was very ill informed, or " very much led by his passions; and being " wrought on by most violent prejudices, against " some that were concerned in that time, delivers " many things in such a manner, and so strangely, " that one would think he had been secretly set on " to it by those of the Church of *Rome*. In one " thing he is not to be excused, that he never " vouched any authority for what he writ, which is " not to be forgiven any who write of transactions " beyond their own time, and deliver new things " not known before. So that upon what grounds " he wrote a great deal of his book we can only " conjecture, and many in their guesses are not " apt to be very favourable to him." Of the same wretched bigot and calumniator, Bishop *Barlow* uses this strong language—" *Peter Heylin*'s angry, and (to our Church and truth) scandalous writings†."

I had stated, that the *Bishop's Book* composed by *Cranmer*, and several other Prelates, in 1537, and subscribed by nineteen Bishops, and by the lower house of Convocation, expressly declared that in the New Testament, there is no mention made of any other ecclesiastical orders " than *Deacons* or " *Ministers*, and *Presbyters* or *Bishops*." I also

* *Christ. Obs.* Vol. III. p. 429.

† *Barlow's Genuine Remains*, p. 181.

asserted, that another Book, drawn up and published by the same high authority, in 1542, taught, in the most explicit terms, a similar doctrine. To this Dr. *Bowden* replies that he has examined *Collier*, who undertakes to give an abstract of both these books, and that he does not find in him "a "syllable of what I have quoted, but much to the "contrary." My authorities are *Calamy's Defence of moderate Nonconformity*, p. 91. and *Neal's History of the Puritans;* in both which the writers profess to quote the very words of the Books in question: And whether a *direct and positive statement*, by authors of undoubted character, does not more than countervail the *silence* of a writer, who, as Episcopalians themselves acknowledge, is not to be depended on, let every impartial reader decide.

Now when it is considered, that those venerable Reformers unquestionably drew up and published the *Books* which have been just mentioned: When we find Professor *Raignolds*, one of the most learned and pious Episcopal Divines of his day, and who lived within about half a century after *Cranmer* and his associates, expressly asserting that they did *not* place Prelacy on the footing of divine right*: When we find Bishop *Stillingfleet*, in his *Irenicum*, and several other eminent Episcopal Divines, strongly asserting the same thing, not as their *opinion* merely, but as a *fact:* And when we find Dr. *White*, of *Pennsylvania*, now

* See my former *Letters*, p. 251.

Bishop of the Episcopal Church in that State, declaring, after the best examination that he had been able to give the subject, that those illustrious Divines did not establish or defend Prelacy as a matter of divine right*—When these things are considered, I presume every impartial judge will admit, that they form a mass of evidence incomparably more weighty than the opinions of Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*, with the partial and prejudiced *Collier* to aid them.

I asserted, that, about the year 1547, in an assembly of Divines called by *Edward* VI. archbishop *Cranmer*, in answer to a question respecting the office of Bishops and Presbyters, replied, "*Bishops* and *Priests* were at one time, and were not *two things*, but *one office* in the beginning of Christ's Religion." And that two other Bishops, together with Dr. *Redmayn*, and Dr. *Cox*, delivered a similar opinion in still stronger terms; and that several of them quoted *Jerome* as a decisive authority in support of their opinion.

To this, Dr. *Bowden* replies, in the *first* place, that he can see nothing in *Cranmer*'s answer inconsistent with Episcopal pre-eminence. Indeed! Were any one to ask Dr. B. himself, as King *Edward* did that assembly, "Whether *Bishops* or *Priests* were first; and if the *Priests* were first, whether the Priests *made* the Bishops?" would

* *The Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States considered.* 12mo. Philad. 1782.

he answer as *Cranmer* did; that Bishops and Priests were not two things in the beginning of Christ's religion, but one and the same office? Could he lay his hand on his heart, and say that he would consider such an answer as agreeable to his principles? The archbishop not only declares that the *names* of Bishop and Priest were interchangeably applied; but that they were *one thing*, or *one office* in the beginning of Christ's religion.—The Bishop of *London*'s answer, in the same assembly, is in a similar strain. "I think," says he, "the Bishops were *first;* and yet I think it is not "of importance whether the Priest then made the "Bishop, or the Bishop the Priest; considering "(after the sentence of St. *Jerome*) that in the "beginning of the Church there was *none* (or if it "were, very small) difference between a Bishop "and a Priest, especially touching the significa-"tion." The man who can say that this answer only asserts the indiscriminate application of *names* in the primitive Church, must have a strange method of interpreting language.

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be easy for me to show, that these writers really say what I ascribe to them; and that they are entitled to credit. It would also be easy to produce passages from *Alphonso de Castro*, *Voetius*, and other learned writers, who, in the most positive terms, give the same account of those celebrated witnesses for the truth. But it is unnecessary. The authority of their own historians and Confessions of Faith is paramount to every other*.

Dr. *Bowden* does not deny that *Wickliffe* held the doctrine of Presbyterian parity. But in order to diminish the weight of this fact, he endeavours to destroy the character of that illustrious Reformer, by repeating the accusations brought against him by some virulent *Papists*. I must say that I expected more *prudence*, if not more *consistency*, from this gentleman. It is really astonishing to find a Protestant Divine so often obliged to avail himself of the arguments, the cavils, and even the

* Among the few gratifications which this controversy has afforded me, none of the least is, that it has led me to peruse, with particular care, the *History* and the *Confessions* of the *Waldenses*, who are allowed, by all Protestants, to have been the purest part of the Christian Church during the dark ages. Their coincidence with our Church, in almost all respects, both of doctrine and discipline, is really remarkable. Our *Baptist* brethren, among other advocates of error, have sometimes ventured to assert, with confidence, that the *Waldenses* were *Anti-pædobaptists*. I take for granted that those who have made this assertion, never read the ancient *Confessions* of that celebrated people. In those Confessions, and other authentic documents concerning them, the *Pædobaptist* doctrine is unequivocally and strongly maintained.

violence of *Papists*, in order to support his cause. But his attempt, in this instance, is as impotent as it is reprehensible. *Wickliffe* will continue to be hailed as the "Morning Star of the Reformation," and honoured as an eminent "Witness for the Truth," and that by the great body of learned and pious Episcopalians, as well as others, when the slanders with which his character has been aspersed shall have "gone the way of all such mis-begotten things."

With respect to *Tyndal*, *Lambert*, *Barnes*, *Hamilton*, and other distinguished martyrs for the truth in *Great-Britain*, before the time of *Cranmer*, it is notorious that they, with one voice, maintained the doctrine of Presbyterian parity. Dr. *Bowden*, indeed, denies this, with respect to *Tyndal* and *Lambert*, or rather endeavours to put an unnatural gloss on their language. It really surprizes me that such an attempt should be made by a gentleman who professes to be acquainted with the history of the Reformation in Britain.

But Dr. *Bowden* seems to be most of all offended at my having asserted, that Archbishop *Cranmer*, and the Fathers of the Reformation in *England*, generally, believed that Bishop and Presbyter were the same, by divine right; and that ministerial parity was the doctrine and practice of the primitive Church. He denies this position with warmth and confidence; and insists that those venerable Reformers were firm believers in the divine institution of Prelacy. Mr. *How* takes the

and a *Sermon*, about the same time, in both which they assure us he delivered doctrines "as highly Episcopal as any thing can be." Dr. *Bowden* has given a short extract from the *latter* of these publications, and took care, no doubt, to select the strongest and most decisive passage he could find. But, strange to tell! this passage affords no proof that the Archbishop believed in the divine institution of Prelacy at all. It speaks of the ministry of the word being derived from the Apostles by the imposition of hands. And do not many *Presbyterians* speak the same language? It speaks of the Apostles making *Bishops* and *Priests*. And does not every *Presbyterian* grant that there were many Presbyters in the Apostles' days who had no pastoral charge, and who were, of course, no Bishops? Is Dr. B. unable to understand this? or does he close his eyes against it? I take for granted that all *Cranmer*'s "high-church notions," as Mr. *How* calls them, if candidly examined, would be found to be of a similar kind.

Dr. *Bowden* admits that in the 13th year of the reign of *Elizabeth*, there was an act passed which admitted into the Church of *England*, those who had received ordination in the foreign Reformed Churches, on their subscribing the articles of faith. Now as there was no other, strictly speaking, than Presbyterian ordination in *any* of the foreign Reformed Churches, it is manifest that this was a great national acknowledgment of the validity of

" pable misrepresentations*." Bishop *Burnet*, in the preface to his *History of the Reformation*, declares, " Either *Heylin* was very ill informed, or " very much led by his passions; and being " wrought on by most violent prejudices, against " some that were concerned in that time, delivers " many things in such a manner, and so strangely, " that one would think he had been secretly set on " to it by those of the Church of *Rome*. In one " thing he is not to be excused, that he never " vouched any authority for what he writ, which is " not to be forgiven any who write of transactions " beyond their own time, and deliver new things " not known before. So that upon what grounds " he wrote a great deal of his book we can only " conjecture, and many in their guesses are not " apt to be very favourable to him." Of the same wretched bigot and calumniator, Bishop *Barlow* uses this strong language—" *Peter Heylin*'s angry, and (to our Church and truth) scandalous writings†."

I had stated, that the *Bishop's Book* composed by *Cranmer*, and several other Prelates, in 1537, and subscribed by nineteen Bishops, and by the lower house of Convocation, expressly declared that in the New Testament, there is no mention made of any other ecclesiastical orders " than *Deacons* or " *Ministers*, and *Presbyters* or *Bishops*." I also

* *Christ. Obs.* Vol. III. p. 429.

† *Barlow's Genuine Remains*, p. 181.

asserted, that another Book, drawn up and published by the same high authority, in 1542, taught, in the most explicit terms, a similar doctrine. To this Dr. *Bowden* replies that he has examined *Collier*, who undertakes to give an abstract of both these books, and that he does not find in him "a "syllable of what I have quoted, but much to the "contrary." My authorities are *Calamy's Defence of moderate Nonconformity*, p. 91. and *Neal's History of the Puritans;* in both which the writers profess to quote the very words of the Books in question: And whether a *direct and positive statement*, by authors of undoubted character, does not more than countervail the *silence* of a writer, who, as Episcopalians themselves acknowledge, is not to be depended on, let every impartial reader decide.

Now when it is considered, that those venerable Reformers unquestionably drew up and published the *Books* which have been just mentioned: When we find Professor *Raignolds*, one of the most learned and pious Episcopal Divines of his day, and who lived within about half a century after *Cranmer* and his associates, expressly asserting that they did *not* place Prelacy on the footing of divine right*: When we find Bishop *Stillingfleet*, in his *Irenicum*, and several other eminent Episcopal Divines, strongly asserting the same thing, not as their *opinion* merely, but as a *fact:* And when we find Dr. *White*, of *Pennsylvania*, now

* See my former *Letters*, p. 251.

Bishop of the Episcopal Church in that State, declaring, after the best examination that he had been able to give the subject, that those illustrious Divines did not establish or defend Prelacy as a matter of divine right*—When these things are considered, I presume every impartial judge will admit, that they form a mass of evidence incomparably more weighty than the opinions of Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*, with the partial and prejudiced *Collier* to aid them.

I asserted, that, about the year 1547, in an assembly of Divines called by *Edward* VI. archbishop *Cranmer*, in answer to a question respecting the office of Bishops and Presbyters, replied, "*Bishops* and *Priests* were at one time, and were not *two things*, but *one office* in the beginning of Christ's Religion." And that two other Bishops, together with Dr. *Redmayn*, and Dr. *Cox*, delivered a similar opinion in still stronger terms; and that several of them quoted *Jerome* as a decisive authority in support of their opinion.

To this, Dr. *Bowden* replies, in the *first* place, that he can see nothing in *Cranmer*'s answer inconsistent with Episcopal pre-eminence. Indeed! Were any one to ask Dr. B. himself, as King *Edward* did that assembly, "Whether *Bishops* or *Priests* were first; and if the *Priests* were first, whether the Priests *made* the Bishops?" would

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such ordinations. Dr. *Bowden* contends, however, that, from the language of *Strype*, in his *Annals*, it is evident that this Act was not designed to recognize as valid the ordinations in *all* the Reformed Churches; but only to comprehend, besides the Papists, "such ministers as had received their ordination in *some* of those Churches, when they were in exile under Queen *Mary*." And by the phrase, "*some* of the foreign Reformed Churches," Dr. B. thinks was probably meant, the Churches of *Sweden*, *Denmark*, and *Bohemia*, which he insists were *Episcopal* in their form. It will, hereafter, be shown, that none of these Churches were *Episcopal*, in Dr. *Bowden*'s sense of the word; and, therefore, that the ordinations in question, even if they had been performed in those Churches, would have been nothing to his purpose. But this is not the worst part of the Doctor's blunder. It is notorious that not one of the Exiles under the reign of *Mary* ever settled in *Sweden*, *Denmark*, or *Bohemia*, or ever received ordination in any of those countries. I appeal to *all* the accounts of their exile, by whomsoever written, for the truth of this fact. Some of those persecuted Protestants went to *France* and *Flanders*; some to *Geneva*; and others to those parts of *Germany* and *Switzerland*, in which the Reformation had taken place, particularly to *Embden*, *Strasburgh*, *Zurich*, and *Frankfort*, in all which countries, no other ordination than that by *Presbyters* existed. I repeat it, *none* of the Exiles either *settled* in *Sweden*, *Denmark*, or *Bohemia*,

or were *ordained* there. Was Dr. *Bowden* ignorant of this fact? Or, if he knew it, to what shall we ascribe his erroneous representation? But I forbear further to expose, what, I trust, was only an unintentional error.

As another proof that the Reformers of the Church of *England* did not hold the excluding, *jure divino* doctrine of Prelacy which many of their successors in that Church have espoused, I produced a public document under the hand of Archbishop *Grindal*, in which he gave a formal license to a Presbyterian minister, as one who had been "*admitted* and *ordained* to *sacred orders*, and the *holy ministry*, by the imposition of hands, according to the *laudable* form and rite of the reformed Church of *Scotland*."

To take away the force of this concession on the part of Archbishop *Grindal*, Dr. *Bowden*, with much zeal, urges several considerations.

The *first* is, that this Prelate was not one of the *Reformers* of the Church of *England* at all; and that it is nothing less than imposition on my readers to place him among them. This is truly a wonderful assertion! Has Dr. *Bowden* ever read *Strype*'s Life of *Grindal*? If he has not, I would recommend to him to procure and peruse it, before he undertakes again to write on this subject. From that work he will learn, that *Grindal* was an active, popular Clergyman, and a decisive advocate of the Reformation in the reign of *Edward* VI.; that he was nominated to a Bishopric by that Monarch;

that he was so obnoxious to the Catholic party, on account of his exertions in the cause of the Reformation, as to be compelled to leave the kingdom on the accession of *Mary* to the throne; that, immediately on his return, he, with others, was employed by Queen *Elizabeth* in reforming the Liturgy and Offices of the Church; that he was soon made Bishop of *London;* that he was afterwards successively promoted to the Archbishopries of *York* and *Canterbury*, in all which stations he signalized himself as a Reformer. But "he was not *Archbishop* until the reign of *Elizabeth.*" And was no man ever ranked among the Reformers unless he was an *Archbishop?* Then *Cranmer* did not become a Reformer until some years after he had begun to struggle for the purification of the Church; and *Ridley*, *Latimer*, and *Hooper*, to say nothing of several others, their illustrious contemporaries, were never Reformers at all! But this plea is really beneath further notice.

Another mode of getting rid of this difficulty, to which Dr. *Bowden* resorts, is to attack the *character* of *Grindal*, and to endeavour to make it appear, that he was so "*fanatical*" and "*irregular*," that his opinion or decision on a subject of this kind ought not to be considered as of any weight. I am perfectly willing to leave this insinuation to be estimated as it deserves, by all who are tolerably acquainted with the history of the Reformation in *England*, and the agency of the pious Archbishop in that glorious struggle.

saying that even good men, who enjoy high ecclesiastical pre-eminence, and corresponding revenues, when two plans of Reformation are offered them, will be most likely to embrace that which will secure the continuance of their honours and emoluments. And does Dr. *Bowden* really think that this affords a solid argument in favour of Prelacy? I cannot possibly suppose a Gentleman of his character to be so far gone in absurdity. Besides, the Doctor does not appear to know, that three Scotch Prelates, viz. the Bishops of *Orkney*, *Galway* and *Caithness*, DID embrace the Reformation, and became *Presbyterian*, or *parochial* Bishops. And, what is still more worthy of notice, it is well known, not only that *Knox* himself was in Episcopal orders, and was a popular preacher in *England*, in the reign of *Edward* VI; but also that a *Bishoprick* was offered him, which he refused, because he considered Prelacy as unlawful; or as having "*quid commune cum Anti-christo**." Accordingly, when *John Douglass* was made *Tulchan* (or *nominal*) Bishop of St. *Andrews*, *Knox* utterly refused to ordain him, denouncing anathemas both against the giver and the receiver. And, when this refusal was imputed to unworthy motives, he publicly declared, in a Sermon, on the next sabbath, "I have refused a greater Bishoprick than ever it "was; and might have had it with the favour of "greater men than he hath this: but I did and do

* FULLER'S *Lives of the Divines.*

England. In the 7th chapter, *Ruling Elders* and *Deacons* are described, and their duties pointed out; the former to assist the minister in the *government* of his flock, and the latter to take care of the *poor*. And in other parts of the work, the government of the Church by *Kirk Sessions*, *Presbyteries*, and *Synods*, is expressly laid down. If this is not the essence of *Presbyterianism*, then I know not what is. It is true, in that Book, the appointment of ten or twelve ministers, under the name of *Superintendents* is recognized and directed. But it is as true, that the same Book, declares, that this appointment was made, not because *Superintendents* were considered as of *divine institution*, or an order to be *observed perpetually* in the Kirk; but because they were compelled to resort to some such expedient, AT THAT TIME, when the deficiency of well qualified Protestant ministers was so great, that if some of the more able and pious had not been entrusted with much larger districts than single parishes, in which to preach the Gospel, to plant Churches, and to superintend the general interests of religion, the greater part of the country must have been given up, either to Popish teachers, or to total ignorance. And it is as true, that the powers with which those *Superintendents* were invested, were, in all respects, essentially different from those of Prelates. They did not *confirm*; they did not exclusively *ordain*; they had no Episcopal *consecration*; they had none of the prerogatives of Prelates; they were entirely subject to the Synodical assemblies, consisting of

Ministers and *Elders;* they were appointed by men who were known to be Presbyterians in principle; who, in the very act of appointing them, disclaimed Prelacy as an institution of Christ; and who gave the strongest evidence that they viewed the subject in this light, by refusing to make the former Bishops, *Superintendents*, lest their office should be abused, and afterwards degenerate into the "old power of the Prelates." In short, the Superintendents were only the *Agents* of the Synods, for managing the affairs of the Church, in times of peculiar difficulty and peril; and whenever these times ceased, or rather before, their office was abolished. They were no more inconsistent with Presbyterian parity, than the practice of appointing *Professors of Divinity*, whose certificates shall be necessary to the introduction of every candidate into the ministry. Yet such Professors have been appointed in every Presbyterian Church that was able to provide for their support.

In 1578, the *Second Book of Discipline* was agreed upon and published by the General assembly of the Church of *Scotland.* In this Book the plan of Church Government laid down, is as perfectly Presbyterian as ever was formed. Nay more, it contains a positive declaration that diocesan Episcopacy is a "corruption;" that a Scriptural Bishop is the Pastor of a single Church or Congregation; and that the plan of giving to certain ministers, under the name of *Bishops*, a prelatical authority over a number of Congregations, and their

Pastors, is a *popish* error. It even goes so far as to require that all such Bishops then in the kingdom renounce their unscriptural title and authority, and submit to the Presbyterian order of the Church, or that they be *deposed* from all ecclesiastical office, and *excommunicated.* In all this, the assembly was supported by an act of Parliament; and thus Prelacy was by law abolished. And yet, "Presbyterianism had no existence in *Scotland* until 1580!" I charitably hope that Dr. *Bowden*, when he made this representation, had never read either the *First* or *Second Book of Discipline*, or the Acts of the General Assembly which accompanied those public documents.

It is readily granted that the Reformers in *Scotland* carried on this glorious work with much difficulty, and amidst great opposition. It is granted that in 1572, and again in 1584, the most violent exertions were made, in the former case, by some ambitious Noblemen; and in the latter, by the King, to restore Prelacy; and that in both cases, there was a partial and nominal restoration of it for a few months, in the same manner as the progress of the Reformation was more than once, and grievously, interrupted in *England.* But it is notorious, that this was in opposition to the views and wishes of all the principal Reformers. It is notorious, that, even in those intervals in which there were *nominal* Bishops, candidates for the ministry were ordained, not by them, but *by the Presbyteries.* And it is equally notorious that, from the first or-

saying that even good men, who enjoy high ecclesiastical pre-eminence, and corresponding revenues, when two plans of Reformation are offered them, will be most likely to embrace that which will secure the continuance of their honours and emoluments. And does Dr. *Bowden* really think that this affords a solid argument in favour of Prelacy? I cannot possibly suppose a Gentleman of his character to be so far gone in absurdity. Besides, the Doctor does not appear to know, that three Scotch Prelates, viz. the Bishops of *Orkney*, *Galway* and *Caithness*, DID embrace the Reformation, and became *Presbyterian*, or *parochial* Bishops. And, what is still more worthy of notice, it is well known, not only that *Knox* himself was in Episcopal orders, and was a popular preacher in *England*, in the reign of *Edward* VI; but also that a *Bishoprick* was offered him, which he refused, because he considered Prelacy as unlawful; or as having "*quid commune cum Anti-christo**." Accordingly, when *John Douglass* was made *Tulchan* (or *nominal*) Bishop of St. *Andrews*, *Knox* utterly refused to ordain him, denouncing anathemas both against the giver and the receiver. And, when this refusal was imputed to unworthy motives, he publicly declared, in a Sermon, on the next sabbath, "I have refused a greater Bishoprick than ever it "was; and might have had it with the favour of "greater men than he hath this: but I did and do

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The same historian, in another work, declares, more strongly, "Being once settled in an orderly "and constant hierarchy, they (the *Scotch*) held "the same, until the Reformation began by *Knox*; "when he and his Associates, approving the *Gene-* "*van* Platform, took the advantage of the minority "of King *James* VI, to introduce *Presbyterian* "discipline, and suppress the Bishops*."

Accordingly, soon after the first establishment of the Reformation in *Scotland*, *Beza*, whose warm attachment to Presbyterianism is universally known, wrote to *Knox* in the following language. "But "I would have you, my dear *Knox*, and the other "brethren, to remember that which is before your "eyes; that *as Bishops brought forth the Papacy;* "so false Bishops, the relics of Popery, shall "bring Epicurism into the world. They that de- "sire the good and safety of the Church, let them "take heed of *this pest;* and seeing you *have* put "*that plague to flight*, I heartily pray you never to "admit again; although it may seem plausible, "under the pretence of keeping *unity;* which pre- "tence deceived the ancient Fathers, even the best "of them.†"

Dr. *Bowden* seems to think that, if *Bishops* had been the leading Reformers in *Scotland*, as they were in *England*, Prelacy would have been retained in the former, as well as in the latter. This is only

* *Cosmographie*, p. 332.

† *Epist.* 79.

saying that even good men, who enjoy high ecclesiastical pre-eminence, and corresponding revenues, when two plans of Reformation are offered them, will be most likely to embrace that which will secure the continuance of their honours and emoluments. And does Dr. *Bowden* really think that this affords a solid argument in favour of Prelacy? I cannot possibly suppose a Gentleman of his character to be so far gone in absurdity. Besides, the Doctor does not appear to know, that three Scotch Prelates, viz. the Bishops of *Orkney*, *Galway* and *Caithness*, DID embrace the Reformation, and became *Presbyterian*, or *parochial* Bishops. And, what is still more worthy of notice, it is well known, not only that *Knox* himself was in Episcopal orders, and was a popular preacher in *England*, in the reign of *Edward* VI; but also that a *Bishoprick* was offered him, which he refused, because he considered Prelacy as unlawful; or as having "*quid commune cum Anti-christo**." Accordingly, when *John Douglass* was made *Tulchan* (or *nominal)* Bishop of St. *Andrews*, *Knox* utterly refused to ordain him, denouncing anathemas both against the giver and the receiver. And, when this refusal was imputed to unworthy motives, he publicly declared, in a Sermon, on the next sabbath, "I have refused a greater Bishoprick than ever it "was; and might have had it with the favour of "greater men than he hath this: but I did and do

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" repine, for discharge of my conscience, that the " Church of *Scotland* be not subject to *that order**."

Let us now pass from the Reformers of *Great-Britain* to those of the continent of *Europe.*

Dr. *Bowden* would persuade us that *Luther* also believed in the divine right of diocesan Episcopacy. Of this Reformer he speaks in the following terms. " As to *Luther*, he professes that if the Popish Bi- " shops would cease to persecute the Gospel," he and those of his communion, " would acknow- " ledge them as their fathers, and willingly obey " their authority, which (says he) *we find support-* " *ed by the word of God.*" Consequently, in his " and their estimation, Episcopacy was an Apos- " tolic institution." *Letter* 15. Dr. *Bowden* has not given us the least hint in what part of *Luther*'s writings this declaration is to be found†; and I shall certainly require to see it with my own eyes, and to trace its connexion, before it is admitted as an authentic testimony of that Reformer's opinion. I make this demand with the more confidence, and with a deeper conviction of its justice, because, in turning over the works of *Luther*, I find *numerous* passages, which speak, *directly* and *unequivocally*, an *opposite* language: passages which Dr. *Bowden*

* *Calderwood.*

† Really, considering the severity with which Dr. *Bowden* censures me for not being in all cases sufficiently attentive to my references, and his formal and solemn promises to be more " scholar like" himself, this omission occurs by far too frequently!

certainly could not have been acquainted with, or he would have been ashamed to pen the above cited paragraph.

It were easy to fill several letters with quotations, strongly in point, from this illustrious man. The following, however, will suffice.

In his treatise, *De Abroganda Missa Privata*, contained in the second volume of his works*, remarking on *Titus* i. 5. he makes the following explicit declaration. "Here, if we believe that the "Spirit of Christ spake and directed by *Paul*, we "must acknowledge that it is a divine appointment, "that in every city there be *a plurality* of Bishops, "or *at least one.* It is manifest also, that, by the "same divine authority, he makes *Presbyters* and "*Bishops* to be *one and the same thing;* for he says "that Presbyters are to be ordained in every city, "if any can be found who are blameless, because "a Bishop ought to be blameless."

In his treatise *Adversus Falso Nominatum Ordinem Episcoporum*†, *Oper. Tom.* Ibid. p. 342. remarking on the same passage of Scripture, he speaks as follows—"*Paul* writes to *Titus* that he

* My edition of *Luther's* works is in seven volumes, folio, printed at *Wittemberg*, 1546—1552.

† Whoever will take the trouble to look into this treatise, which is expressly written against *Bishops*, as a separate and pre-eminent order, will find *Luther* decidedly maintaining that a *Scriptural Bishop* was nothing more than a *Pastor* of a single Congregation; and strongly inveighing against the doctrine that *Bishops* are an order above Pastors, as a *Popish* error.

" should ordain Elders in every city. Here, I " think, no one can deny that the Apostle repre- " sents *Bishop* and *Elder* as signifying *the same* " *thing.* Since he commands *Titus* to ordain El- " ders in every city; and because a *Bishop* ought " to be blameless, he calls an *Elder* by the same " title.' It is, therefore, plain what *Paul* means by " the term *Bishop*, viz. a man eminently good and " upright, of proper age, who hath a virtuous wife, " and children in subjection in the fear of God. " He wills such an one to preside over the congre- " gation, in the ministry of the word, and the ad- " ministration of the sacraments. Is there any " one who attends to these words of the Apostle, " together with those which precede and follow, " so hardened as to deny this sense of them, or to " pervert them to another meaning?"

In the same work, page 344, 345. he thus speaks —" But let us hear *Paul* concerning this divine " ordination. For *Luke* in the 20th chapter of the " *Acts* of the the Apostles, writes concerning him " in this manner. *From Miletus, having sent mes-* " *sengers to Ephesus, he collected the Elders of the* " *Church, to whom, when they had come to him, he* " *thus said—Take heed to yourselves and to all the* " *flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you* " *overseers*, &c. But what new thing is this? Is " *Paul* insane? *Ephesus* was but a single city, and " yet *Paul* openly calls all the Presbyters or El- " ders, by the common style of *Bishops.* But per- " haps *Paul* had never read the legends, the mi-

" you will be able to conceive of the fact as it was. " When *Peter*, or either of the other Apostles, " came to any city where there were Christians, " out of the number he chose one or more aged " men, of blameless lives, who had wives and chil- " dren, and were well acquainted with the Scrip- " tures, to be set over the rest. These were cal- " led *Presbyters*, that is *Elders*, whom both *Peter* " and *Paul* also style *Bishops*, that we may know " that Bishops and Presbyters were *the same*."

Again, in his Commentary on the second verse of the same chapter, he says, " I have often said, " that if we would wish to have the Christian com- " monwealth rightly established, it is necessary " that there be, *in every city, three or four Bishops*, " who should superintend the Church, and, if any " thing should be at any time delinquent or lost, " restore it."

But this is not all. *Luther* declared his principles on this subject by his *practice*, as well as by his *writings*. He was ordained a Presbyter in the Romish Church, in the year 1507, in the 24th year of his age*. As a Presbyter, he considered himself as authorized to ordain others to the Gospel ministry; and accordingly, soon after assuming the character of a Reformer, he actually did or-

* Vid. *Gerhard, De Ministerio*, p. 147, 148. The same fact is also attested by *Zanchius*. *In* IV. *Præcep.* p. 774. *Gerhard*, who lived not long after *Luther*, expressly asserts that he was ordained a Presbyter, with the imposition of hands, in the year above mentioned.

dain*. Nay, he went a step further. Though a firm believer in the doctrine of the primitive parity of ministers, he seems to have considered it as *not unlawful* to have diocesan *Bishops* or *Superintendents* in the Church, when either the form of the civil government, or the habits or wishes of the people rendered it desirable; always, however, placing their appointment on the ground of *human expediency alone.* Accordingly, in the year 1542, when an Episcopal seat within the electorate of *Saxony* became vacant, *Luther*, at the request of the Elector, though himself nothing more than a Presbyter, consecrated *Amsdorff* Bishop of that diocese†. But if *Luther* had believed in "the Apostolic institution of diocesan Episcopacy," as Dr. *Bowden* tells us he did, could he have acted thus? It is not possible. It would have been a grossness of inconsistency and dishonesty with which that holy Reformer was never charged.

Nor did *Luther* abandon either his principles or his practice, on this subject, to his last hour. This appears from the following testimony of his biographer, concerning what occurred a few days before his death. "From the 29th day of January till the "17th day of February, he was continually occu- "pied about the matters of concord and agreement "of the aforesaid noble princes, bringing it unto a "most godly conclusion. And besides his great

* *Melchior Adam*, 129.

† Ibid. 150.

" labour in so necessary a cause, he preached in " the mean time, four worthy sermons, and two " times communicated with the Christian Church " there, in the holy Supper of the Lord; and in " the latter communion, which was on Sunday, *he* " *ordained two ministers of the word of God, after* " *the Apostles' manner**." This great Reformer, then, in the solemn anticipation of death, and when he expected, in a few days, to appear before his eternal Judge, still claimed and exercised the right of ordaining ministers, as he had done for near thirty years; and what is more, his biographers, who were eminent divines of the *Lutheran* denomination, and *Luther*'s most intimate friends, declare, that, in their judgment, as well as that of their illustrious chief, ordination by a *Presbyter* was in conformity with " the Apostles' manner."

Nor did *Luther* stand alone, among the Churches of his denomination, in maintaining the primitive parity of Gospel ministers. This is evident from the *Confessions*, and other ecclesiastical documents, which were early set forth, and which have been ever since received by those Churches.

Among the standards of the *Lutheran* Churches, the *Augustan Confession* holds the first rank. It was drawn up by *Melancthon*, approved by *Luther*,

* " *The True History of the Christian Departing of the* " *Rev. Dr. Martin Luther; collected by Justus Jonas, Mi-* " *chael Celius, and Joannes Aurifaber, which were present* " *thereat.*"

and formally presented to the Emperor *Charles* V, by those Reformers, and their adherents, in the year 1530, as a summary of the doctrines received by them. In this celebrated *Confession* there is a reference to a charge brought against the *Lutherans* by the *Papists*, that they had abolished the order of *Bishops*, as a superior grade of Clergy. The fact is not *denied*, but *defended;* and that on the ground that it was necessary to obey God rather than man; and to be guided by Scripture rather than human traditions. It is observable, also, that in this *Confession*, the preaching of the Gospel, and the administration of the Sacraments, are represented as the *highest* functions of the ministry, and the right to perform these as including all other ministerial power*.

The work next in authority, as a compend of Lutheran doctrine, is the famous *Defence of the Augustan Confession*, composed by *Melancthon*, in the year 1530; presented to the Emperor at *Augsburg*, the same year; acknowledged as the Creed of the Protestants there assembled; published in 1531, and solemly adopted as one of the standards of the Lutheran Church, by her principal civil and ecclesiastical guides of that day.—In the 7th chapter of this *Defence*, the following passage is found. Speaking of *Episcopacy*, they say, "Concerning this point, "we have often declared, in the present conven- "tion, that we earnestly desire to retain *the eccle-*

* See the article on *Ecclesiastical Power* throughout

" *siastical polity*, and those *grades* which are estab-
" lished in the Church, *although brought in by hu-*
" *man authority*. For we know that this form of
" ecclesiastical discipline, as it is described in the
" ancient Canons, was introduced by the Fathers
" of the Church with good and useful counsel."
—Here is one of the strongest testimonies imaginable in favour of the doctrine of primitive parity. In a Confession of Faith, drawn up and subscribed by some of the most eminently pious and learned Divines that ever lived, while they express a strong predilection in favour of that Episcopal regimen which they found in the Church, and which had been long established; they still declare, that they consider it as " brought in by human authority"—and as resting on no other ground than " the good and useful counsel of their fathers."

The work next in authority in the Lutheran Churches, is the famous collection of *Articles* drawn up and adopted at *Smalkald*, in 1537. They were composed by *Luther*, subscribed by him, and also by *Melancthon*, *Jonas*, *Bugenhagius*, *Myconius*, and many other illustrious Lutheran Divines; and solemnly acknowledged, at a general meeting of Protestants, in the city whose name they bear, as containing a summary of their theological and ecclesiastical principles. In those articles, the following declarations are found. " It is clear, even
" from the confession of our adversaries, that this
" power, (to wit of preaching, dispensing the Sacra-
" ments, excommunication, and absolution,) is

"common to all that are set over the Churches, "whether they be called Pastors, Presbyters, or "Bishops. Wherefore *Jerome* plainly affirms, "that there is *no difference* between a *Bishop* and "a *Presbyter;* but that every Pastor is a Bishop. "Here *Jerome* teaches that the distinction of *de-* "*grees* between a Bishop, and a Presbyter or Pas- "tor, was only appointed by *human authority;* and "the thing itself imports no less; for on both "Bishop and Presbyter is laid the same duty, and "the same charge. Only *Ordination* in AFTER "TIMES made the difference between Bishop and "Pastor. By *divine right* there is *no difference* "between them*."

The last public document of the Lutheran Church, which I shall quote, as supporting our doctrine, is *a Syllabus of Controverted Points*, digested out of the received Creeds and Confessions of that Church, and published with those Creeds and Confessions by authority. In chapter 18. § 4. of this work, we find the following explicit declaration. "*Ordina-* "*tion* to the work of the ministry is necessary in "a Church at liberty; but this act *does not belong* "*to Bishops alone*, nor can it with propriety be "called a sacrament. We hold this in opposition "to the *Papists*, and also to certain *English Epis-* "*copalians*, as *Carleton*, *Hall*, and *Bilson*, who dis-

* *Articuli Smalcaldici Christianæ Doctrinæ—Scripti à D. Martino Luthero, Anno* 1537—Art. *De Potestate et Jurisdictione Episcoporum.*

" tinguish between *Presbyters* and *Bishops* as to " the point of *ordination**."

But we may go much further. Almost ALL the public *Confessions* which were drawn up and adopted at the era of the Reformation, contain the same doctrine, and speak the same language. Mr. *How* indeed declares, that " the universal language at the time of the Reformation," was in favour of the Apostolical institution of Prelacy, and offering no other plea but that of *necessity* for establishing a different system of ecclesiastical order. Dr. *Bowden* makes, in substance, the same assertion. What these gentlemen will think of themselves, and of their representation, after perusing the following extracts, is not for me to decide.

In the *Confession of Saxony*, drawn up in 1551, by *Melancthon*, and subscribed by all the *Saxon* Churches, the following passages are found. Art. 11. " We do also retain in our Churches the pub- " lic rite of ordination, whereby the ministry of the " Gospel is commended to those that are truly " chosen, whose manners and doctrine we do first " thoroughly examine. These things pertain to " the ministry,—to teach the Gospel; to administer " the Sacraments; to give absolution to them that " ask it, and do not persevere in manifest offences; " to ordain ministers of the Gospel, being rightly

* *Appendix ad Libros Ecclesiæ Lutheranæ Symbolicos, &c.* p. 195.

" called and examined; to exercise the judgment " of the Church after a lawful manner, upon those " who are guilty of manifest crimes in manners or " in doctrine; and to pronounce the sentence of ex- " communication against them that are stubborn, " and again to absolve and pardon them that do " repent. That these things may be done order- " ly, *there be also Consistories appointed in our* " *Churches**."

The *Confession of Wirtemberg*, drawn up in 1552, by order of the Duke of *Wirtemberg*, and presented by his ambassadors to the Council of *Trent*, as a specimen of Protestant doctrine, contains the following declarations. Art. 20. " Christ, " in his Church, hath instituted Ministers who " should preach his Gospel, and administer the Sa- " craments. Neither is it to be permitted to " every one to usurp a public ministry in the " Church, without a lawful calling. *Paul* writeth " that *a Bishop* ought to be apt to teach; and *Je-* " *rome* teacheth *that a Priest and a Bishop are all* " *one.* Therefore it is evident, that except a Priest " be ordained in the Church to the ministry of " teaching, he cannot rightly take unto him neither " the name of a Priest, nor the name of a Bi- " shop†."

The *French Confession*, formed in 1559, and subscribed by all the Pastors of the Protestant

* *Harmony of Confessions. Sect.* 10.

† *Ibid.* Sect. 11.

Churches in that kingdom, contains the following explicit declarations. *Art.* 29. "We believe that "this true Church ought to be governed by that "regiment or discipline, which our Lord Jesus "Christ hath established, to wit, so that there be "in it *Pastors*, *Elders*, and *Deacons*, that the *pu-* "*rity of doctrine* may be retained, *vices suppressed*, "the *poor*, and others that be in misery, according "to their necessity, may be provided for; and "that there may be holy meetings, for the edify- "ing both of small and great." *Art.* 30. "We "believe that all true Pastors, in what place soever "they be placed, have the same and equal authori- "ty given unto them, under Jesus Christ, the only "Head, and the chief and alone universal Bishop; "and that, therefore, it is not lawful for any Church "to challenge unto itself dominion or sovereignty "over any other Church*."

The *Belgic Confession*, formed in 1566, contains the following explicit and decisive articles. Art 30. "We believe, that this Church ought to be ruled "and governed by that spiritual regiment, which "God himself hath delivered in his word, so that "there be placed in it *Pastors* and *Ministers*, pure- "ly to preach, and rightly to administer the holy "Sacraments—That there be also in it *Seniors* (or "*Elders*) and *Deacons*, of whom the Senate "of the Church might consist, that, by these "means, true Religion might be preserved,

* *Harm. of Confessions*, Sect. 11.

" and sincere doctrine in every place retained and " spread abroad; that vicious and wicked men " might, after a spiritual manner, be rebuked, " amended, and as it were by the bridle of disci- " pline kept within their compass; that the poor " in like manner, and those that be afflicted, may " be relieved, either with aid or comfort, accord- " ing to the several necessities of every one. For " then shall all things in the Church be done in " due and convenient order, when faithful and " godly men are chosen to have the government of " the same, even as St. *Paul* hath prescribed in " 1 *Timothy* 3. and in *Titus* 1." Art. 31. " We " believe that the *Ministers*, *Elders*, and *Deacons*, " ought to be called to those their functions, and " by the lawful election of the Church to be ad- " vanced into those rooms, earnest prayer being " made unto God, and after the order and manner " which is set down unto us in the word of God. " This especially every one ought to take diligent " heed of, that he do not by unlawful means thrust " himself into those offices. For every one must " wait until he be called of God himself, that he " may have a certain testimony of his vocation, " and may know that it is from the Lord. Yet in " what place of the world soever the ministers of " the word of God do keep, they have all of them " *the same and equal power and authority;* being " all of them *equally* the ministers of Christ, the " only universal Bishop and Head of the Church*."

* *Harmony of Confessions*, Sect. 11.

The second *Helvetic Confession* was drawn up by the Pastors of *Zurich*, in the year 1566, and subscribed not only by themselves, but also by the Churches of *Geneva*, *Hungary*, and *Scotland*. In the eighteenth chapter of that Confession, which is entitled, *Of the Ministers of the Church, their Institution and Offices*, are found the following declarations—" The Apostles of Christ do term all " those which believe in Christ, *Priests*, but not in " regard of their ministry, but because all the " faithful, being made *Kings* and *Priests* by Christ, " may offer up spiritual sacrifices unto God. The " *Ministry*, then, and *Priesthood* are things far " different one from the other. For priesthood, " as we said even now, is common to all Christians, " so is not the ministry. And we have not taken " away the ministry from the Church, because we " have thrust the Popish priesthood out of the " Church of Christ. For surely in the New Co- " venant of Christ, there is no longer *any such* " *Priesthood as was in the ancient Church of the* " *Jews*, which had an external anointing, holy gar- " ments, and very many ceremonies, *which were* " *figures and types of Christ*, who by his coming, " *fulfilled and abolished them*. And he himself re- " maineth the only Priest for ever; and we do not " communicate the name of *Priest* to any of the " ministers, lest we should detract any thing from " Christ. Now the power that is given to the mi- " nisters of the Church is the same and alike in " all: and, in the beginning, the *Bishops* or *Elders*,

" did, with a common consent and labour, govern " the Church. No man lifted up himself above " another; none usurped greater authority or " power over his fellow Bishops; for they remem- " bered the words of the Lord, *He which will be* " *the chiefest among you, let him be your servant.* " They kept in themselves by humility, and did " mutually aid one another in the government and " preservation of the Church. Notwithstanding " for orders' sake, some one of the ministers called " the Assembly together, propounded unto the As- " sembly the matters to be consulted of, gathered " together the voices or sentences of the rest, and, " to be brief, as much as lay in him, provided that " there might arise no confusion. So did Saint " *Peter*, as we read in the *Acts;* who yet, for all " that, was neither above the rest, nor had greater " authority than the rest. Very true, therefore, is " that saying of *Cyprian*, the Martyr, in his book " *De Simpl. Cler.*—*The same doubtless were the rest* " *of the Apostles that Peter was, having an equal* " *fellowship with him both in honour and power;* " *but the beginning thereof proceedeth from unity,* " *to signify unto us that there is but one Church.*— " Saint *Jerome*, upon the Epistle of *Paul* to *Titus*, " hath a saying not much unlike this—*Before that* " *by the instinct of the Devil there was partaking* " *in religion, the Churches were governed by the* " *common advice of the Presbyters; but after that* " *every one thought, that those whom he baptized* " *were his own and not Christ's, it was decreed*

" *that one of the Presbyters should be chosen and set* " *over the rest, who should have the care of the* " *whole Church laid upon him, and by whose means* " *all schism should be removed.* Yet *Jerome* doth " not avouch *this* as an order *set down of God:* for " straightway after, he addeth—*Even as*, saith he, " *the Presbyters knew by the continual custom of* " *the Church, that they were subject to him that is* " *set over them—So the Bishops must know that they* " *are above the Presbyters, rather by custom, than* " *by the prescript rule of God's truth; and they* " *should have the government of the Church in com-* " *mon with them.* Thus far *Jerome.* Now there- " fore no man can forbid by any right, that we " may *return to the old appointment of* God, and " rather receive that, than the custom devised by " men.—Furthermore, no man ought to usurp the " honour of the ecclesiastical ministry, that is to " say, greedily to pluck it to him by bribes, or any " evil shifts, or of his own accord. But let the " ministers of the Church be called and chosen by " a lawful and ecclesiastical election and vocation. " —And those which are chosen, *let them be or-* " *dained of the Elders, with public prayer, and lay-* " *ing on of hands.* We do condemn all those " which run of their own accord, being neither " chosen, sent, nor ordained*."

The *Confession of Bohemia*, drawn up about 1573, in chapter 9th, contains the following passage—

* *Harmony of Confessions*, Sect. 11.

"Ministers ought not of their own accord to press "forward in that calling; but ought, according to "the example of the Lord and the Apostles, to be "lawfully appointed and ordained thereunto. And "again, these ought to be proved and tried by ex- "amination, and so afterwards, prayers and fas- "tings being made, they may be *confirmed or ap- "proved of the Elders, by laying on of hands.*"— Chapter 14. "The power of the keys is committed "to the Church of Christ, and to the ministers "thereof unto the end of the world; that they "should not only, by preaching, publish the holy "Gospel, although they should do this especially, "that is, should show forth that word of true com- "fort, and the joyful message of peace, and new "tidings of that favour which God offereth; but "also that, to the believing and unbelieving, they "should publicly or privately denounce or make "known, to *them* his favour, to *these* his wrath, "and that to all in general, or to every one in par- "ticular, that they may wisely receive some into "the house of God, to the communion of saints, "and drive some out from thence, and may so, "through the performance of their ministry, hold in "their hand the sceptre of Christ his kingdom, "and use the same to the government of Christ "his sheep. And all these things are done by the "faithful shepherds of souls in the Lord's stead, "not doing this of themselves, but upon Christ his "commandment; not by their own and proper "virtue, but by Christ's, and by the efficacy of his

" word and sacraments, as those that are stewards " and dispensers of the mysteries of God, and mi- " nisters only. In the administration of which " things they may use some seemly and indifferent " ceremonies, that is, which are no way necessa- " ry, such as laying on hands, or reaching out the " right hand; or else they may omit them.—This " power of his sceptre and spirit hath the Lord " granted and delivered to the holy Apostles, *and* " *in them to all ministers of Churches lawfully or-* " *dained*, that they might exercise in his stead: " and he granted it to them by these words, *As the* " *Father hath sent me, so do I send you also.* By " this we may understand that these keys, or this " divine function of the Lord's, is committed and " granted to those that have the charge of souls, " and to each several ecclesiastical society*, " whether small or great. Moreover, every " Christian, so often as he needeth these keys of " the Lord, ought to require them particularly for " himself of the Pastors of souls of that Church or " fellowship, of which himself is a part, and to " which he belongeth; and that he use them with " full confidence, no otherwise than if he had re- " ceived them of Christ himself, seeing that Christ " hath delivered them unto the Pastors. This is

* This is explained, by a note on the article, in the following words—" That is to *Presbyteries* or *Consistories*, which stand " of Pastors and Elders; and unto whom properly the dis- " pensing and ordering of the keys, and ecclesiastical cen- " sures do belong."

" also taught and handled, that the Priests ought " not to use these keys of the Lord, otherwise than " according to the meaning and will of Christ, ex- " pressed in his word*."

From public *Confessions* drawn up by the Reformers, let us descend to *individual opinions* expressed by those illustrious Witnesses for the truth, in different countries. Of these the following specimen will be sufficient.

Ursinus, a learned German Divine, contemporary with *Luther* and *Melancthon*, speaks the same language. " Ministers," says he, " are either *imme-* " *diately* called *of God*, or *mediately* through the in- " strumentality of the Church. Of the former " class, were *Prophets* and *Apostles*. Of the latter " class there are five kinds, viz. *Evangelists*, *Bi-* " *shops*, or *Pastors*, *Teachers*, *Ruling Elders*, and " *Deacons*. *Evangelists* are ministers appointed " to go forth and preach the Gospel to a number " of Churches. *Bishops* are ministers ordained to " preach the word of God, and administer the sa- " craments, in particular Churches. *Teachers* are " ministers appointed merely to fulfil the function " of *teaching* in particular Churches. *Ruling El-* " *ders* are ministers elected by the voice of the " Church, to assist in *conducting discipline*, and to " order a variety of necessary matters in the " Church. *Deacons* are ministers elected by the

* *Harmony of Confessions*, Sect. 11.

" Church, to *take care of the poor*, and to *distribute* " *alms**."

The very learned *Musculus*, also of *Germany*, a Reformer contemporary with *Luther*, and who embraced his principles, having proved from *Acts* 20. *Phillip.* 1. 1. *Titus* 1. 5. and 1 *Peter* v. 1. that, in the Apostles' times a *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were *all one*, adds as follows: " But after the Apostles' " times, when, amongst the Elders of the Church, " (as *Jerome* saith,) schisms arose, and, as I verily " think, they began to strive for the pre-eminence " by little and little, they began to choose one " out of the number of the Elders, who was placed " above the rest, in a higher degree, and called Bi- " shop. But whether that *device of man* profited " the Church or no, those who lived in succeeding " times could better judge, than when it first be- " gan. If *Jerome* had seen as much as those who " came after him, he would, no doubt, have con- " cluded that this was never brought in to take " away schism, but was *a project of the Devil* to " waste and destroy the *primitive ministry*, appoin- " ted for feeding the Lord's flock." Again, he declares, " Whence it evidently appears that, in the " times of the Apostles, *Elders*, *Pastors*, and *Bi-* " *shops* were *one* and *the same* in God's Church." " —It is beyond all dispute, that the first and " Apostolic Church, was, by the Apostles so con- " stituted, that the Elders of the Church did ex-

* *Ursin. Corpus Doctrinæ*, Par. III. p. 721.

"ercise a common Episcopal care over the Lord's "flock, and enjoyed the same function of teaching "and governing, and were therein subject to no "head or president*."

Zsegedin, an eminent Lutheran divine of *Hungary*, contemporary with *Luther* and *Calvin*, delivers, in substance, the same doctrine. The following quotations are decisive. "May one Pastor pre-"side over other pastors? The practice, indeed, "hath obtained that Presbyters should preside, "each one in his own College, and that this per-"son alone should be called *Bishop*. This, how-"ever, arose from *human custom*, and is *by no* "*means* supported by the *authority of Scripture*. "And from perverting the signification of a word "this evil hath arisen, that, as if *all Presbyters* "were not *Colleagues*, and called to the *same func-*"*tion*, one, under the pretext of a new title, arroga-"ted to himself a dominion over others†." Again, "hence learn that all Pastors are *equal* both in "their *vocation* and *function;* and that there is no "*prelatical* tyranny constituted. It is necessary, "indeed, that, among brethren, there should be "some one to convene the college, to state the bu-"siness, and, when it is necessary, to write and "speak in the name of the college. But this per-"son, to avoid the odium of *prelatical tyranny*, may "be called *Superintendent*. The power of *Super-*

* *Loci Communes De offic. Minist.* p. 360—362.

† *Loci Communes*, p. 197. Fol. Quint. Basil. 1608.

" *intendents* ought to be temporary and definite, " *not perpetual**." Again, " Is the title of *Bi-* " *shop* common to *all ministers* of the word? Yes, " certainly. For *Paul*, in the first chapter of the " Epistle to the *Philippians*, represents many Bi- " shops as belonging to one Church. The titles " *Bishop*, *Pastor*, *Presbyter*, are, therefore, *synony-* " *mous*. Bishop is a term expressive of *duty* and " *care*, not of *dignity*."—Again, " The *Popish* " Bishops are false Bishops; not successors of the " *Apostles*, but of *Balaam*, cruel, heretical, enemies " of Christ, who esteem the Episcopate on ac- " count of its introducing them to great riches. " While *Paul* comprehends under the name of Bi- " shop, *all Pastors*, the *Papists* will have it that " none is to be held as a Bishop but the one who " is chosen by the college to preside over his breth- " ren†."

The learned *Junius*, an eminent Dutch professor of divinity, who lived at the commencement of the Reformation in *Holland*, and who was, of course, nearly contemporary with *Luther*‡, wrote very fully and explicitly in support of Presbyterian principles. In his work entitled *Ecclesiastici*, he decidedly, and with great learning, maintains, that

* *Loci Communes*, p. 197.

† Ibid. 202.

‡ Of this illustrious Reformer, it is related, that he preached in the city of *Antwerp* at midnight, with no other light than that which was produced by the flames of burning martyrs.

Pastors, Ruling Elders, and Deacons, are the only three scriptural orders of Church officers; that Pastors, or ministers of the word and sacraments, are the highest order, and, of course, are invested with the power of *ordaining;* that the second class are men of distinguished piety and prudence, chosen from among the members of the Church, to assist the Pastor in the *government* of the Church; and that the *Deacons* are appointed to collect and distribute the *alms* of the Church. He affirms that these three orders are set forth in Scripture, and existed in the primitive Church. He declares that a scriptural *Bishop* was the Pastor of a single Congregation; and that giving this title, by way of eminence, to one of the Pastors in a city or district, was a practice introduced *after* the time of the Apostles, and is to be be considered as a departure from the primitive model*.

The same writer, in his *Animadversions* on Cardinal *Bellarmine*, is still more pointed and positive against the claims of diocesan Episcopacy, and in favour of the Presbyterian doctrine of parity.—It is really amusing to trace the Popish Cardinal through all his reasonings and cavils, and to observe what a remarkable coincidence there is between him and Dr. *Bowden;* and it is no less worthy of notice that *Junius*, though he wrote nearly two hundred and fifty years ago, and, of course, many

* *Ecclesiastici, sive de Nat. et Administrat. Ecclesiæ, &c.* Lib. II. Cap. 2, 3, 4.

years before the Synod of *Dort*, argues as uniformly and strongly in favour of Presbyterian principles, as any champion of Presbytery that ever appeared. I cannot forbear particularly to observe, that *Bellarmine* turns in every direction, and strains every nerve, to set aside the testimony of *Jerome;* and for this purpose, in almost every instance, employs exactly the same arguments and the same subterfuges with Dr. *Bowden:* While *Junius* pronounces and proves his arguments to be futile, and his subterfuges unavailing, and the testimony of that celebrated Father to be precisely what the friends of parity have ever considered it*.

The learned *Sadeel*, a French Protestant Divine, contemporary with *Calvin* and *Beza*, has frequently been represented by Episcopal writers, as friendly to their claims, and even as acknowledging the apostolical institution of Episcopacy. What the opinions of this Reformer really were, will appear from the following quotations. In answer to a learned *Popish* Doctor, who, like some of our zealous Episcopalians, warmly contended that the power of ordination was confined to diocesan Bishops, he declares, "This *Sorbonne* Doctor objects, "that our ministers are only *Presbyters*, and not "*Bishops;* and therefore could not *ordain* other "ministers, since only Bishops have a right to ordain. That this opinion is *false*, I shall imme-

* *Fr. Junii Animadversiones in Bellarm. Controv.* v. Lib. 1. Cap. 5, 6, 7.

" diately show. It is evident, from the word of " God, that *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are *the same.* " This appears from *Titus* i. 5, from *Acts* xx, and " from *Philip* i. 1. But the *Doctor* will reply, " that the names are indeed used interchangeably " in the passages above stated; but that the offices " themselves are carefully distinguished in Scrip- " ture. But, I answer, when the *Presbyters* are " called *Bishops*, the Apostle is, in such places, " treating not of the names and titles only, but of " the office and function itself. For when he ex- " horts the Presbyters of *Ephesus* to the right ex- " ercise of their office, he adds this reason, that " the Holy Ghost had constituted them *Bishops;* " and, therefore, he says, not that they were only " *called* so; but that they were, in very deed, con- " stituted such Bishops. So that the answer touch- " ing the confusion of names is quite overthrown. " —But the *Sorbonne* Doctor tells us that *Paul* en- " joins *Timothy* to *lay hands suddenly on no man*, " and, therefore, none but *Timothy* had the right " of ordination. But this conclusion is utterly " without foundation; for *Timothy* is also enjoined " to reject fables, and to give attendance to read- " ing, exhortation, and doctrine, &c. Did *Timo-* " *thy*, therefore, arrogate all these things to him- " self alone? Did they not belong to *Presbyters*, " who, by *Paul*'s testimony, laboured in the word " and doctrine? *Timothy*'s episcopacy at *Ephesus* " cannot be made good by any testimony of Scrip- " ture." Again—" If we allow to Presbyters the

" right to preach the Gospel, to administer Bap-
" tism, and to celebrate the Lord's Supper, upon
" what imaginable ground can we deny them the
" right to *ordain?* Therefore such as exclude
" Presbyters from the right to ordain, show them-
" selves to be grossly ignorant both of the nature
" of ordination, and of the Pastoral office." And in support of all this reasoning, and much more, which I am compelled to omit, he quotes the famous testimony of *Jerome*, and pronounces it to be conclusive. He quotes also *Irenæus*, *Ambrose*, and *Augustine*, as giving testimony which co-incides with that of *Jerome;* and adds, " I cite these, be-
" cause the *Papists* esteem the authority of the
" Fathers, more than that of plain declarations of
" Scripture*."

But, in addition to all this, there is testimony of a different kind. It not only appears, from the public *Confessions*, and individual declarations, which have been quoted, that the Apostolical institution of ministerial parity was believed by the *Lutheran*, as well as the *Reformed* Churches; but it is evident that they were considered by *others* as having avowed their belief in that docrine.

The famous Cardinal *Bellarmine* certainly understood the *Protestants* of his day *generally* to hold the equality of Bishops and Presbyters by divine

* *Oper. Theol.* Tom. 1. Tract. *De Legitima Vocatione Pastorum Ecclesiæ.* p. 65—67.

right. "If," saith he, "Episcopacy be a sacra-
"ment distinct from the Presbyterate, it will be
"easy to prove that a Bishop is, both in order and
"jurisdiction, greater than a Presbyter, by divine
"right; which NOW, ALL THE HERETICS (the *Pro-*
"*testants*) DENY*." *De Sacramento Ordinis*, Cap. 5. And in his work, *De Clericis*, he makes a similar declaration in terms equally express. For having asserted that a Bishop is superior to a Presbyter, by divine right, both with respect to order and jurisdiction, he ascribes the contrary doctrine to *Aerius*, to *Wickliffe*, to the *Lutherans*, and the *Calvinists*. Cap. 14.

Crakenthorp, a learned divine of the church of *England*, contemporary with *Bellarmine*, speaking of *Luther*, and the other Reformers on the continent of *Europe*, expresses himself in the following terms. "They have not, I know, *Bishops*, distinct from
"*Presbyters*, and superior to them; but at the same
"time, they do not teach, as *Aerius* did, that minis-
"terial imparity is contrary to the word of God.
"They do not condemn it. They hold that, by
"the word of God, and divine right, either parity,
"or imparity is *lawful*; and that every Church

* *Bellarmine* was contemporary with Archbishop *Whitgift*. It seems that, at that time, the Cardinal knew of no Protestants who held to the divine right of Prelacy. It is evident, therefore, that this doctrine was then either *wholly unknown* in *England*, or maintained by *so few*, that they were not considered as worthy of being recognized as an exception.

" has authority or power to admit either the one or " the other as it thinks best*."

On these documents I shall not trouble you with many remarks. They speak a language so uniform, decided, and conclusive, that it can neither be mistaken nor resisted. And they establish, beyond the possibility of dispute, that all the leading Reformers were firm believers in the primitive parity of ministers. That this was the opinion of *Luther*, *Melancthon* †, and all the principal divines of their communion, has been abundantly proved. That *Calvin* was uniformly of the same opinion, will be demonstrated in the next Letter. That the *Saxon*, *Helvetic*, *French*, *Belgic*, and *Bohemian* Confessions, all declare in favour of this

* *Defensio Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ.* Cap. 42. Sect. 6.

† It has been said that *Melancthon*, on a certain occasion, expressed a willingness to submit to the power of Prelates, provided they would become patrons of the Reformation. This is true. It is also true, that the same pious and amiable, but too accommodating, *Melancthon*, when he subscribed the famous *Smalkald Articles*, annexed to his subscription a declaration, (which is still to be seen,) that he was willing to allow the *Pope* a superiority over all other Bishops, for the sake of the peace of the church; provided he would aid in reforming the church. And it is as true as either, that by these concessions, *Melancthon* gave great offence to the Protestants of his own communion, and complains in one of his letters, of the resentment which they manifested against him on this account. See *Melancthon's Epistles*, near the beginning of the volume. Having mislaid the notes which I made, at the time of perusing the passage, I am not able, at present, to make a more particular reference.

doctrine, as received and practised in the Apostolic age, you have seen with your own eyes. And, finally, that *Cranmer* and his associates, who commenced the Reformation in *England*, did also, at least at *one period*, concur in the same acknowledgment, has been placed beyond all reasonable doubt.

After viewing this body of testimony, what must we think of Mr. *How*'s repeated declarations, that "the Reformers, *universally* admitted "the Apostolic claims of the Episcopal constitu-"tion;" that "*Luther* and *Melancthon* acknowledg-"ed the obligation of Episcopacy; excusing their "departure from it on the ground of *necessity*;" that "Episcopacy was *never* ranked, by the Re-"formers, among the corruptions, or innovations "of the Papacy;" that "they *all* recognized it as "an institution primitive and apostolic; acknow-"ledging without reserve, their obligation to con-"form to it?" And what must we think of Dr. *Bowden*, (from whom better information and more caution might have been expected,) when he fully concurs with Dr. *Hobart* and Mr. *How*, in this language of bold and unqualified assertion? How Gentlemen who have any accurate knowledge of the rise and progress of the Reformation; or who have attended to the history and the contents of public Confessions, could write thus, is, indeed, unaccountable! I am lost in astonishment when I think of the fact!

It only remains that we notice, for a moment,

the assertion of Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*, that in the Lutheran churches of *Sweden* and *Denmark*, Prelacy, both in *fact* and *name*, is received. If these Gentlemen mean, that there are ministers in *Sweden* and *Denmark*, who bear the titles of *Bishop* and *Archbishop*, their assertion is undoubtedly correct; and this is no more than I explicitly stated in my former Letters. But if they mean, that the *Swedish* and *Danish* churches believe in the divine right of Prelacy; that they consider Episcopal ordination as necessary to constitute the Christian ministry; or that they do, *in fact*, always insist upon such ordination—they are unquestionably in a gross error; and have given their readers a most delusive view of the subject.

With respect to *Sweden*, it is well known, that those who planted the Reformation, and ordained the first Protestant ministers in that country, were mere Presbyters. And although, from the influence of *habit*, they chose to retain the names and some of the functions of *Bishops* and *Archbishops*; yet it is equally certain, that the first persons who bore these titles, were set apart to their office by Presbyters; and, of course, received themselves, and were enabled to communicate to others, no other than Presbyterian ordination. As to the point of light in which this subject is regarded by the church of *Sweden*, I am happy in being able to produce the testimony of the Rev. Dr. *Collin*, Pastor of the *Swedish* church in *Philadelphia*; a Gentleman whose acquaintance with the ecclesiastical sys-

tem of his native country cannot be doubted; and whose character is a sufficient guarantee for the accuracy of his statements. He assures me, in a letter, written at my request, that all the *Swedish* Divines, and particularly those who themselves enjoy the Episcopal dignity, consider Episcopacy merely as a *human regulation;* that this is the doctrine of all their standard books; that accordingly, in the absence of those who are styled *Bishops*, ordinations are performed by ordinary clergymen; and that even *Bishops* and *Archbishops*, may be set apart to their office by Presbyters. In support of these facts, Dr. *Collin* produces the most decisive testimony from *Swedish* writers of the highest authority; and declares, that there is but one opinion among them on the subject. He adds, "The *Danes* agree with us in this "matter. *Vandalin*, Primarius Professor of The-"ology in *Copenhagen*, in a much esteemed work "published in the year 1727, has the following pas-"sage, p. 354. *An jure divino Episcopi a Presby-"teris distincti sunt? Negatur; contra Pontificios "et quosdam Anglos.*" i. e. "Are Bishops and "Presbyters distinct orders by divine right? We "deny it; in opposition to the *Papists*, and to cer-"tain persons of the church of *England.*" He then goes on to establish his opinion by reference to a number of passages of Scripture, which are precisely those which Presbyterians usually quote.

The result of all the testimony exhibited in the present Letter, is this. That the *Waldenses*,

the *Bohemian Brethren*, and all the great individual witnesses for the truth, prior to the time of *Luther*, were almost without exception, decidedly anti-prelatical in their sentiments. That at the period of the Reformation, the Presbyterian form of church government was established in all the Reformed churches in *Germany*, *Scotland*, *France*, *Geneva*, and *Holland;* and its establishment in all these countries, accompanied with public and solemn declarations that they considered this as having been the Apostolic and primitive form. And, that, although in the *Lutheran* churches of *Germany*, *Sweden*, *Denmark*, and other parts of *Europe*, some ministers were invested with pre-eminent powers, under different titles; yet that they all, with one voice, declared, that in the Apostolic church, ministerial parity prevailed; and acknowledged, that the order of Bishops was brought in by *human authority*, and was a regulation of *expediency* alone. Such was the doctrine maintained by those churches, at that interesting period; and the same doctrine has been maintained by them uniformly to the present hour. It follows, then, agreeably to my declaration in a former Letter, that the church of *England* stands absolutely ALONE, in the whole Protestant world, in asserting the divine institution of Prelacy, (if indeed, she, as a church, *does* assert it, which many of her own most respectable sons have denied); that every other Protestant church on earth has formally disclaimed this doctrine, and pronounced the distinction between Bishops and

Presbyters to be a mere *human invention;* and, consequently, that the doctrine of the *jure divino* prelatists, is so far from being the *general* doctrine of the Reformed churches, that it *never has been*, and is not *now*, received, by more than a very small portion—a mere handful of the Protestant world.

I repeat once more—the Bible is the Statute-book of the church of Christ; and by this book alone, must the question before us be finally decided. But, so far as human opinion, fortified by all the considerations of talents, learning and piety, is of any value, the doctrine of Presbyterian parity stands on the most elevated and triumphant ground.

LETTER VII.

The Testimony of Calvin.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

IT has fallen to the lot of few individuals to be more mistaken and misrepresented than the venerable *Calvin*. His great talents, his profound learning, his fervent piety, his stupendous labours, his astonishing self-denial, and his sublime disinterestedness, have all been insufficient to protect him from the grossest abuse. His personal character, his theological opinions, and the form of ecclesiastical government which he preferred, have each, in turn, been the objects of accusation and slander. Had these unfair statements been either always the same, or consistent with themselves, it would not have been wonderful to find them making some impression on persons who had no access to sources of correct information. But when scarcely any two of these statements can be reconciled with each other; and when the most of them are expressly contradicted by authentic documents, it is truly, a matter of wonder that they should be favourably received by any who have the least claim to the character of learning or impar-

tiality. This wonder, however, exists. We can hardly open a controversial work from the pen of any of our Episcopal brethren, without finding more or less obloquy directed against the illustrious Reformer of *Geneva.*

Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* have indulged themselves in this obloquy in a manner, and to an extent, which appears to me to demand animadversion. And as they lay so much stress on the supposed concessions of *Calvin* in favour of Episcopacy; and, at the same time, appear to enter with such hearty good will into every attempt, by whomsoever made, to load his character with reproach, I have resolved to devote the whole of the present letter to a view of the writings, the opinions, and the general character of that celebrated man.

Had these gentlemen, been contented with exhibiting *Calvin*, as a man of a "fierce," "turbulent," and "intolerant spirit;" had they spoken only of his "characteristic violence," of his "playing the tyrant," and of his malignant disposition to crush all who opposed him;—to such charges I should have thought it unnecessary to reply. To refute them, completely and triumphantly, as applicable in any peculiar or pre-eminent degree to that apostolic man, nothing more is requisite than a tolerable acquaintance with the history of his life and time. When so many of the greatest and best Prelates that ever adorned the Church of *England;* men *really* learned, and breathing in an extraordinary degree the spirit of

the Gospel, have delighted to dwell on the praises of *Calvin;* when they have almost exhausted every epithet of respect in eulogizing his talents, his learning, his piety, his judgment, and the usefulness of his labours;—his memory surely needs no defence against the attacks of Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*. But when these gentlemen bring forward allegations and extracts, which are calculated to mislead even their intelligent readers, and to set the *declarations* and the *practice* of the pious Reformer at variance; I deem it my duty to make a few remarks, and to state a few facts, in vindication of what I consider as the cause of primitive truth and order.

Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* represent *Presbyterianism* as having *originated* with *Calvin*. Now it happens that *Presbyterianism*, (to say nothing of its apostolic origin,) was introduced into *Geneva*, before *Calvin* ever saw that city, when he was about nineteen years of age, and while he was yet in the communion of the Church of *Rome*. The following quotation from Dr. *Heylin*, a high-toned Episcopalian, and a favourite authority of Dr. *Bowden*, will be considered by him as decisive. "In this "condition it *(Geneva)* continued, till the year "1528, when those of *Berne*, after a public dispu- "tation held, had made an alteration in religion, "defacing images, and innovating all things in the "Church on the *Zuinglian* principles. *Viretus* and "*Farellus*, two men exceeding studious of the "Reformation, had gained some footing in *Geneva*, "about that time, and laboured with the Bishop to

"admit of such alterations, as had been newly "made in *Berne*. But when they saw no hopes "of prevailing with him, they practised on the "lower part of the people, with whom they had "gotten most esteem, and travelled so effectually "with them in it, that the Bishop and his clergy, "in a popular tumult, are expelled the town, never "to be restored to their former power. After "which they proceeded to reform the Church, de-"facing images, and following in all points the ex-"ample of *Berne*, as by *Viretus* and *Farellus* they "had been instructed; whose doings in the same, "were afterwards countenanced and approved by "*Calvin*, as himself confesseth*."

The declaration of *Calvin* to which *Heylin* refers, is probably that which he makes in his famous Letter to Cardinal *Sadolet*. In the beginning of that Letter, he expressly informs the Cardinal, that "the religious system of *Geneva* had been institu-"ted, and its ecclesiastical government reformed, "before he was called thither. But that what had "been done by *Farel* and *Viret*, he heartily ap-"proved, and strove, by all the means in his pow-"er, to *preserve* and *establish*."

Beza also informs us, and, after him, *Melchior Adam*, and others, that in the year 1536, when *Calvin* stopped at *Geneva*, on his way to *Basil*, without having the remotest thought of settling at the former place, *Farel* and *Viret*, then Pastors of *Geneva*,

* *Heylin's Hist. of Presbyter.* p. 4—9.

earnestly importuned him to remain in that city, and to become their associate in the ministry; that he still, however, declined; that it was not until *Farel* ventured, in the name of the Omnipotent God, to denounce a curse against him, if he should persist in refusing, that he consented to remain at *Geneva;* and that he at length submitted himself to the will of the PRESBYTERY, and of the magistrates, by whose suffrages, the consent of the people being obtained, he was elected and set apart as a Pastor, and also as a public Teacher of divinity, in the month of August, 1536*. From this statement one fact is indubitable, viz. that there was a *Presbytery* in *Geneva* before *Calvin* went thither. Another fact is equally clear, viz. that the settlement of a minister was considered as a proper act of the Presbytery. Nor will it in the least degree serve the cause of my opponents to contend that the ecclesiastical system of *Geneva* was, *afterwards*, new-modelled and improved by *Calvin*. Be it so. Still it is certain that the leading principles of Presbyterian polity, viz. the the doctrine of *ministerial parity*, the government of the Church by *Presbyteries*, and the appointment of *Ruling Elders*, or a number of pious and judicious laymen, formed into *Church Sessions*, or *Consistories*, to assist in administering discipline, were received and in use, before the public ministry of *Calvin* commenced, or any of his writings had appeared.

* See *Beza's* Life of *Calvin*: and *Melchior Adam's* do. p. 68.

Dr. *Henry More*, in his *Divine Dialogues*, p. 82. speaking of the Reformation of *Geneva*, says,—"As for *Calvin*, the charge of rebellion upon him "is, that he expelled the Bishop of *Geneva*, who "was the chief magistrate of that city, and chang-"ed the government, and so carried on the Refor-"mation. But this is a *mere calumny* against *Cal-"vin*, and *without all ground;* for not so much as "that is true, that *Calvin* was one of the first plan-"ters of the Reformation at *Geneva;* and much "less that he, or any other Reformers expelled the "Bishop out of that city. It was *Farel*, *Viret*, and "*Froment*, that, by their preaching, converted *Ge-"neva*, in the Bishop's absence, who fled away "eight months before, being hated by the citizens "for the *rape of a virgin*, and *many adulteries with "their wives.*"

That Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* should be unacquainted with all this, is truly surprising! I know, indeed, that it is expecting too much to suppose that these gentlemen will take the trouble to investigate more than one side of this controversy. But when their own favourite writers might have informed them of all the facts above stated, it is rather singular that they should have yet to learn them.

Another allegation of these Gentlemen is, that *Calvin*, in the *early part* of his public life, thought very favourably of diocesan Episcopacy, and even believed and acknowledged its Apostolic origin. That *afterwards*, when he had undertaken to erect

a church on a different model, and especially when he had the prospect of attaining great distinction in the Presbyterian establishment of *Geneva*, he began to alter his views and his language; but that, even after he had fairly embarked in support of Presbyterian principles, he rather defended himself by the plea of *necessity* than *divine authority*. Nay, Mr. *How* declares, that *Calvin*, in rearing the church of *Geneva*, acknowledged that he was departing from the primitive discipline; that he considered prelacy as an apostolic institution; and that he expressed a *decided preference* in favour of this form of government: But adds, "I deny not that "*Calvin* and *Beza* held, *afterwards*, a language "*more Presbyterial*. At length, indeed, schism, "and the pride of sect, either changed their senti- "ments, or perverted their principles. In fact, "the conduct of these men, in relation to the minis- "try of the Christian church, presents one of the "most melancholy examples of the prevalence of "pride over virtue, and of the unhappy influence "of schism, in blinding and infatuating the mind, "that the history of human frailty has ever record- "ed." *Letters*, p. 62—75. Dr. *Bowden*, is equally positive in asserting, that *Calvin* believed and acknowledged the Apostolic origin of Episcopacy; and that he justified himself in departing from it only on the ground of *necessity*. In fact, by subscribing and referring to Dr. *Hobart*'s statement of the case, in his *Apology for Apostolic Order*, p. 91

—117, the reverend Professor has gone the whole length of Mr. *How*.

When I read assertions of this kind, I cannot help recollecting, in a well-known and popular fictitious history, a certain chapter which bears the following title—"An humble attempt to prove "that an author will write the better for having "some knowledge of the subject on which he "writes." If I had the least apprehension that these gentlemen had ever perused the works of *Calvin*, or really knew what he has left on record upon this subject, such a representation, so frequently and confidently made, would excite feelings more unfavourable than those of astonishment. But as I have no such apprehension, and feel perfectly persuaded that the perusal of a few detached passages, forms the sum total of their acquaintance with *Calvin*'s writings, I cannot find in my heart to apply a severe epithet to a misrepresentation so total concerning the history of his language and opinions.

The truth is, that the *earliest* of *Calvin*'s writings contain some of the strongest declarations in favour of Presbyterian principles that are to be found in all his works. His *Institutions*, his first theological work, were published in 1536, before he had ever seen *Geneva;* before he ever thought of settling there; and when he was so far from aspiring to pre-eminence in any Presbyterian establishment, that he does not appear to have had in view the pastoral office in *any* Church. Now it is certain that this work is as decisive on the subject

of Presbytery as any that ever came from his pen. At that period, when his mind appears to have been as dispassionate and impartial as ever that of a Reformer was; when he had no visible temptation to deviate from the Apostolic model; and when both habit and prejudice were leagued against Presbytery, and in favour of Episcopacy; at that period, and in that work, he decidedly declared himself an advocate of Presbyterian government, as the truly Apostolic and primitive plan. But the following quotations from it will place this fact in a stronger light, than any reasonings or statements of mine.

Book iv. Chap. iii. In this chapter he expressly declares it to be his intention to exhibit "that order by which it was the Lord's will to have his Church governed."—In doing this, he unequivocally delivers it as his opinion, that the Apostolic model of Church-government was Presbyterian;—that both the office and ordination of Bishop and Presbyter were the same; that the scriptural Bishop was the Pastor of a single Church; that there were sometimes more Bishops than one in the primitive Churches, and all on a perfect equality; and that there were *Ruling Elders* and *Deacons* in those Churches, exactly on the Presbyterian plan.

The following extracts, out of many that might be made, are decisive. "Whereas I have indiscriminately called those who govern the Churches, *Bishops*, *Presbyters*, and *Pastors*, I have done so according to the usage of Scripture,

" which indifferently employs these terms to de-
" signate the same officer; for whoever executes
" the office of ministers of the Gospel, to them the
" Scriptures give the title of *Bishops*. So by *Paul*,
" where *Titus* is commanded to ordain Elders in
" every city, it is immediately added, *for a Bi-*
" *shop must be blameless*, &c. Tit. i. 5. So, in
" another place, (*Philip.* i. 1.) he salutes many
" Bishops in one Church. And in the *Acts* it is
" related that he called together the Elders of
" *Ephesus*, whom he himself, in his discourse to
" them, styles *Bishops*. *Acts* xx. 17. But here it
" is to be observed, that hitherto we have only ta-
" ken notice of those offices which pertain to the
" ministry of the word; neither doth *Paul* make
" mention of any other in the fourth chapter of
" the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, which we before
" cited. But in the Epistle to the *Romans* (xii.
" 7.) and in the first Epistle to the *Corinthians*,
" (xii. 28) he reckons up other offices, as powers,
" the gift of healing, interpretation, government,
" taking care of the poor. Of these, I omit such as
" were merely temporary, because it is not worth
" the trouble to dwell upon them. But there are
" two that are permanent, *government*, and *the*
" *care of the poor*. Those who governed were,
" in my opinion, Elders chosen out of the laymen
" of each congregation, who, together with the Bi-
" shops, bore rule in the correction of morals, and
" in the exercise of discipline. For no one can
" otherwise expound that which the Apostle saith,

a church on a different model, and especially when he had the prospect of attaining great distinction in the Presbyterian establishment of *Geneva*, he began to alter his views and his language; but that, even after he had fairly embarked in support of Presbyterian principles, he rather defended himself by the plea of *necessity* than *divine authority*. Nay, Mr. *How* declares, that *Calvin*, in rearing the church of *Geneva*, acknowledged that he was departing from the primitive discipline; that he considered prelacy as an apostolic institution; and that he expressed a *decided preference* in favour of this form of government: But adds, "I deny not that "*Calvin* and *Beza* held, *afterwards*, a language "*more Presbyterial*. At length, indeed, schism, "and the pride of sect, either changed their senti- "ments, or perverted their principles. In fact, "the conduct of these men, in relation to the minis- "try of the Christian church, presents one of the "most melancholy examples of the prevalence of "pride over virtue, and of the unhappy influence "of schism, in blinding and infatuating the mind, "that the history of human frailty has ever record- "ed." *Letters*, p. 62—75. Dr. *Bowden*, is equally positive in asserting, that *Calvin* believed and acknowledged the Apostolic origin of Episcopacy; and that he justified himself in departing from it only on the ground of *necessity*. In fact, by subscribing and referring to Dr. *Hobart*'s statement of the case, in his *Apology for Apostolic Order*, p. 91

of God, and of the ministries as instituted by Christ," he undertakes, in this chapter, to exhibit the order which obtained in the "ancient Church," that is, as he explains it, the Church as it existed soon *after* the Apostolic age, and before the rise of the Papacy. Now this "ancient Church," he expressly declares, *deviated* from the pure Apostolic model; but, at the same time, he supposes that the deviation was not great or essential. He proceeds, "As we have declared that there are three sorts "of ministers commended to us in the Scriptures; "so all the ministers that the ancient Church had, "it divided into three orders. For out of the or- "der of Presbyters, part were chosen *Pastors* and "*Teachers*, and the rest *bore rule* in the adminis- "tration of discipline. To the *Deacons* was com- "mitted the care of the poor, and the distribution "of alms. All those to whom the office of teach- "ing was committed, were called *Presbyters*. "They, in every city, chose one, out of their own "number, to whom they, specially, gave the title "of *Bishop;* that dissentions might not grow out "of equality, as is wont to be the case. Yet the "Bishop was not *so* in honour and dignity above "the rest, as to have *any dominion* over *his col-* "*leagues;* but the office which the Consul had in "the Senate, to propose business; to collect opin- "ions; to preside in consulting, admonishing, and "exhorting; to direct, by his authority, the whole "process of business; and to put in execution that "which was decreed by the common counsel of all,

" (*Rom.* xii. 8.) *He that ruleth let him do it with* " *diligence.* Every Church, therefore, from the " beginning, had its own *Senate*, collected from " among the godly, grave and holy, who had that " jurisdiction over the correction of vices of which " we shall speak hereafter.—And, moreover, that " this was the order of more than one age, expe- " rience itself teaches. This office of government, " therefore, is necessary for all ages."

" The care of the poor was committed to the " *Deacons*——Although the word Deacon has " a more extensive meaning; yet the Scripture " especially calls them *Deacons*, to whom the " Church hath given in charge the distribution of " alms, and the care of the poor; and hath ap- " pointed them, as it were, stewards of the com- " mon treasury of the poor—whose origin, institu- " tion, and office are described by *Luke* in *Acts* vi. " For when a murmuring arose among the *Gre-* " *cians*, because in the ministrations to the poor, their " widows were neglected, the Apostles, excusing " themselves, as not being adequate to the execu- " tion of both offices, both the preaching of the " word, and the ministering at tables, requested " the multitude to choose seven honest men, to " whom they might commit that business. Behold " what manner of *Deacons* the Apostolic Church " had; and what kind of Deacons it becomes us " to have in conformity with their example!"

Book iv. *Chap.* 4th. Having treated of the order of the Church as " delivered in the pure Word

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" —the same office had the *Bishop* in the assem-
" bly of *Presbyters*. And even *this* the ancient
" writers themselves confess, was brought in *by*
" *human consent*, on account of the necessity of the
" times.—Therefore *Jerome*, in his commentary
" on the Epistle to *Titus*, saith—A *Presbyter* was
" the *same* with a *Bishop*. And before there were,
" by the Devil's instigation, dissentions in religion,
" and it was said among the people, *I am of Paul*,
" and *I of Cephas*, the Churches were governed
" by the common council of Presbyters. After-
" wards, that the seeds of dissention might be
" plucked up, all the care was devolved on one per-
" son.—As therefore the Presbyters know that
" *by the custom of the Church*, they are subject to
" him who presides among them; so let the Bi-
" shops know, that they are above the Presbyters
" *rather by custom*, than by any real appointment
" of Christ; and that they ought to govern the
" Churches in common. And in another place,
" (*Epist. ad Evagr.*) he teaches how ancient an
" institution this was; for he says that at *Alexan-*
" *dria*, from *Mark*, the Evangelist, down to *Hera-*
" *clas* and *Dionysius*, the Presbyters always placed
" one, chosen out of their own number, in a high-
" er station, and called him Bishop. Every city,
" then, had a college of Presbyters, who were
" Pastors and Teachers, and who all executed
" among the people the offices of instructing, ex-
" horting, and exercising discipline, which *Paul*
" enjoins on Bishops, *Titus* i. 9. And every one

" of these colleges, (as I said before,) was under " the presidency of one Bishop, who was only *so* " *far* above the rest in dignity, as to be himself " subject to the assembly of his brethren."

In chapter 11th, Sect. 6, of the same Book, speaking of the exercise of discipline in particular Churches, he says—" But such authority was not " in the power of one man, to do every thing ac- " cording to his own will; but in the assembly of " the Elders, which was the same thing in the " Church that a senate is in a city. The com- " mon and usual manner was for the authority of " the Church to be exercised by a senate of Elders, " of whom (as I have before said) there were *two* " *sorts*, for some were ordained to *teach*, and " others only to *rule* in matters of discipline. But " by little and little this institution degenerated " from its original character; so that even in the " time of *Ambrose*, the clergy alone had cognizance " of ecclesiastical causes, of which he complains " in these words—The ancient synagogue," says he, " and afterwards the Church, had Elders, " without whose counsel nothing was done."—We " see how much the holy man was displeased, that " there should be a falling off in any respect, when " as yet things continued, to say the least, in a " tolerable condition.—What would he have said " if he had seen the mis-shapen ruins which now " appear, and which exhibit scarcely any vestige of " the ancient edifice? What lamentation would " he have expressed? For, first, against law and

" right, the Bishop hath *usurped to himself* that " authority which was vested in the Church. For " it is all one as if the Consul had expelled the Se- " nate, and assumed the empire to himself alone. " For surely, though he is in honour superior to " the rest, yet there is more authority in the col- " lege than in one man. It was, therefore, a *very* " *wicked deed*, that one man, having gotten into his " own hands the power which was before common " to the whole college, paved the way to tyranni- " cal domination, snatched from the Church her " own right, and abolished the Presbytery, which, " by the Spirit of Christ had been ordained."

Book IV. *Chapter.* V. *Sect.* 15. " Now let the " *Deacons* come forth, and that holy distribution " which they have of the Church's goods; although " they by no means, at present, create their Dea- " cons for that purpose. For they (the Papists) " enjoin upon them nothing else but to minister at " the altar, to read or sing the Gospels, and to " perform I know not what trifles. Nothing of " the *alms*, nothing of the care of the *poor*, nothing " of the *whole function* which, in *former times*, they " executed. I speak of the very institution; for " if we have a respect to what they do, it is not in " itself an office, but only a step toward the priest- " hood. Therefore *they mock the Church with* " *this lying Deaconry.* Truly therein they have " nothing like, either the institution of the Apos- " tles, or ancient usage."

Such was the language of *Calvin* in 1536, when he was just entering on his great career. And this was his uniform language to the end of his life. I cannot find a single passage in all his writings in which he speaks with greater severity of diocesan Episcopacy, than in some of the preceding extracts. On their import it is unnecessary to enlarge. They speak for themselves.

The following extracts from *Calvin*'s Commentary, written at different periods of his life, and under different circumstances, will show that his opinion on the subject in dispute was uniformly the same.

In his Commentary on *Philip.* i. 1. written in the year 1548, we find the following passage. "He "calls the *Pastors*, *Bishops*, for the sake of honour. "Moreover we infer from this place that the name "of *Bishop* is common to *all ministers of the* "*word*, since the Apostle assigns a *plurality* of *Bi*"*shops* to a single Church. The names *Bishop* "and *Pastor* are, therefore, synonymous. And "this passage is one of those which *Jerome* cites "to prove the same thing, in his Epistle to *Eva*"*grius*, and in his exposition of the Epistle to *Ti*"*tus*. Afterwards it became customary that he "who presided in the bench of Presbyters of a par"ticular Church, should alone be called Bishop. "This, however, arose from *human custom*, and is "*by no means supported by Scripture.*—I confess, "indeed, that such are the tempers and habits of men

" that order cannot be maintained among ministers " of the word, unless one preside. But I speak of " particular bodies; not of whole provinces; and " much less of the whole world. And although " it is not proper to dispute about words; yet it " is better in speaking, to follow the Holy Spirit, " the author of language, than to change the forms " of expression established by him for the worse. " —For out of the corrupted signification of a " word, this evil arose, that thence, as if all the " Presbyters were not *colleagues*, and called to the " *same function*, one, *under the pretext of a new* " *title, arrogated to himself a dominion over others.*"

In his exposition of *Titus* I. 5. written in 1549, he thus writes. " *Presbyters* or *Elders*, it is well " known, are not so denominated on account of " their *age*, since *young* men are sometimes chosen " to this office, as, for instance, *Timothy;* but it " has always been customary, in all languages, to " apply this title, as a term of honour, to all rulers. " And as we gather, from the first Epistle to *Ti-* " *mothy*, that there were *two kinds* of Elders, " so here the context shows that no other than " *teaching Elders* are to be understood; that is, " those who were ordained to *teach;* because the " same persons are immediately afterwards called " *Bishops.*—It may be objected, that too much " power seems to be given to *Titus*, when the " Apostle commands him to appoint ministers over " all the Churches. This, it may be said, is little " less than kingly power; for, on this plan, the

" right of choice is taken away from the particu-
" lar Churches, and the right of judging in the
" case from the college of Pastors; and this would
" be to profane the whole of the sacred discipline
" of the church. But the answer is easy. Every
" thing was *not entrusted* to the will of *Titus* as *an*
" *individual*, nor was he allowed to impose such
" Bishops on the Churches as he pleased; but he
" was commanded to *preside* in the elections, as a
" *Moderator*, as it is necessary for some one to do.
" This is a mode of speaking exceedingly common.
" Thus a Consul, or Regent, or Dictator is said
" to create Consuls, because he convenes assem-
" blies for the purpose of making choice of them.
" So also *Luke* uses the same mode of speaking
" concerning *Paul* and *Barnabas*, in the *Acts of the*
" *Apostles;* not that they alone, authoritatively ap-
" pointed Pastors over the Churches, without their
" being tried or approved; but they *ordained* suitable
" men, who had been elected, or chosen by the peo-
" ple. We learn also, from this place, that there was
" not, then, *such* an equality among the ministers of
" the Church, as was inconsistent with some one
" presiding in authority and council*. This, how-

* The original of this sentence is as follows—*Discimus quidem ex hoc loco, non eam fuisse tunc equalitatem inter Ecclesiæ ministros quin unus aliquis autoritate et consilio præesset.* Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* both quote this sentence, both undertake to translate it for the benefit of their readers, and both concur in giving the following translation—" Hence we " learn that there was not *any equality* among the ministers " of the Church, but that one was placed over the rest in

" ever, is nothing like the *tyrannical and unscriptu-*
" *ral prelacy* which reigns in the Papacy. The
" plan of the Apostles was extremely different."

On the 7th verse of the same chapter, he thus expresses himself—" Moreover this place abundantly
" teaches us that there is no difference between
" *Presbyters* and *Bishops;* because the Apostle
" now calls promiscuously by the second of these
" names, those whom he had before called *Presby-*
" *ters;* and indeed the argument which follows,
" employs both names indifferently in the same
" sense; which *Jerome* hath observed, as well in
" his commentary on this passage, as in his Epistle
" to *Evagrius.* And hence we may see how much
" more has been yielded to the opinions of men
" than was decent: because the style of the Holy
" Spirit being abrogated, a custom introduced by
" the will of man, prevailed.—I do not, indeed,
" disapprove of the opinion, that, soon after the com-
" mencement of the Church, every college of Bi-
" shops had some one to act as *Moderator.* But
" that a name of office which God had given *in*
" *common to all,* should be transferred to an *indi-*

" authority and council." This is one of the principal quotations from *Calvin* on which they found the assertion that he believed in the Apostolical origin of Episcopacy! Instead of saying what they ascribe to it, it asserts directly the contrary. It declares that there was an *official equality* among the ministers of the primitive Church; but, at the same time, an equality by no means inconsistent with one being *Moderator.* This is precisely the Presbyterian *doctrine* and *practice.*

" *vidual alone*, the rest being *robbed of it*, was both " *injurious* and *absurd*. Wherefore so to pervert " the language of the Holy Spirit, as that the same " expressions should convey a meaning to us *diffe-* " *rent from that which he intended*, partakes too " much of *profane audacity*."

In his commentary on 1 *Peter* v. 1. written in 1551, and dedicated to *Edward* VI, of *England*, the following passage occurs. " *Presbyters*. By " this title he designates *Pastors*, and whoever " were appointed to the government of the Church. " And since *Peter* calls himself a Presbyter, like " the rest, it is hence apparent that this name was " common; which, indeed, from many other pas- " sages appears still more clearly. Moreover, by " this title he claimed to himself authority; as if he " had said, that he admonished Pastors in his own " right, because he was *one of their number*; for " among *colleagues* there ought to be this mutual " privilege. Whereas if he had enjoyed any pre- " eminence of authority among them, he might " have urged that, and it would have been more " pertinent to the occasion: But although he was " an Apostle, yet he knew that this gave him no " authority over his colleagues; but that he was " rather joined with the rest in a social office."

Calvin's exposition of the first Epistle to *Timothy* was written in the year 1556, and dedicated to the Duke of *Somerset*, Lord Protector of *England*. In his remarks on the fifth chapter and seventeenth verse, of that Epistle, he speaks thus.—" From

" this passage we may gather that there were then " *two kinds* of *Presbyters*, because they were *not* " *all* ordained to the work of *teaching*. For the " words plainly mean, that some *ruled well*, to " whom *no part* of the public *instruction* was com- " mitted. And verily there were chosen from " among the people, grave and approved men, who, " in common council, and joint authority with the " Pastors, administered the discipline of the church, " and acted the part of censors for the correction " of morals.——This practice *Ambrose* complains " had *fallen into disuse*, through the *indolence*, or " rather the *pride* of the teaching Elders, while " they wished to be alone distinguished."

I will only add, that, in his commentary on *Acts* xx. 28, written in 1560, a short time before his death, he expresses himself thus—" Concerning " the word *Bishop*, it is observable, that *Paul* gives " this title to all the *Presbyters* of *Ephesus:* from " which we may infer, that according to Scripture, " *Presbyters* differed, *in no respect*, from *Bishops:* " but that it arose from *corruption*, and a *departure* " *from primitive purity*, that those who held the " first seats in particular cities, began to be called " *Bishops*. I say that it arose from *corruption*, not " that it is an evil for some one, in each college of " Pastors, to be distinguished above the rest; but " because it is *intolerable presumption*, that men, " in *perverting the titles* of Scripture to their own " humour, do no hesitate to *alter the meaning* of " the Holy Spirit."

But, in spite of all these repeated and positive declarations of *Calvin*, Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* still insist, that he acknowledged the Apostolical institution of Prelacy, and offered the plea of *necessity* for adopting the Presbyterian government in *Geneva*. To prove this, they produce two extracts from his writings, which have really nothing to do with the subject; but which, ever since the time of the ignorant or disingenuous *Durell*, have been trumphantly quoted by high-church-men, for a similar purpose.

The first of these extracts is from *Calvin*'s famous letter to Cardinal *Sadolet*, and is in the following words. "We do not deny that we want a "*discipline* such as the ancient Church (*Vetus Ec-*"*clesia*) had. But with what justice can we be "accused of subverting discipline, by those very "men (the Papists) who alone have entirely de-"stroyed it; and who, when we endeavoured to "restore it, have hitherto prevented us? But "with respect to *doctrine*, we are willing to be "compared with the ancient Church*."

How far this extract really goes towards proving the point intended to be established by it, will appear from the following analysis of the Letter. *Calvin*, in his reply to *Sadolet*, pursues the method which the Cardinal had adopted in arranging his charges against the Church of *Geneva*. He

* *Ad Sadoletum Responsio* CALVINI. *Tractatus Theologici*. p. 125.

firmly defends his own ministry, which we all know was *Presbyterian*, and which his antagonist had represented as invalid. He warmly refutes the charge of *ambition*, and *pecuniary* influence, alleged against the reforming ministers. After defining what he means by a Church; and after repelling the charge, that he had *left* the Church, by showing that he had only *reformed* it; he invites *Sadolet* to compare their respective Churches with the *Ancient* Church. The Cardinal could not, consistently with Popish pretensions, submit to be tried by the state of the Church as described in the New Testament. *Calvin*, therefore, although he considered the Apostolic Church as the only proper model, waves his right, for the sake of argument, and challenges the Cardinal to compare with *antiquity*. "Not," says he expressly, "not with that form which the Apostles appointed, which is the only model of a true Church;" but even with the "*Ancient Church*," as it stood in the days of *Chrysostom* and *Basil*, among the Greeks; and of *Cyprian*, *Ambrose*, &c. among the Latins: which "ancient Church," he justly asserts, differed as much from the Church of *Rome*, at the time of his writing, as did the reign of *David* from that of *Zedekiah*. In order to make an impression on Popish minds, *Calvin* judged it more suitable to show the defection of their Church from what they themselves called the standard, than their inconsistency with Apostolic order, about which they had less concern.

Calvin maintains in this Letter, that the *Sacraments* and the *doctrine* of the "ancient Church," corresponded much more nearly with the *Reformed* than with the *Popish* Church. He readily confesses that the *discipline* of the Reformed, differs from that of the "ancient Church." But he alleges, at the same time, that this concession cannot avail the Cardinal, whose Church *differs still more* from that discipline. And he also alleges, that, amidst all the opposition and difficulties with which they had to struggle, in the restoration of strict discipline, they were still going on; that they had already approached *nearer* to the "ancient Church" than their popish neighbours'; and, by perseverance, were likely soon even to *surpass* that model. Now, all this reasoning would have been very preposterous, if *Calvin* had been here speaking of Prelacy. For how could the Church of *Geneva*, which was *Presbyterian in* its form, be *nearer*, on prelatical principles, to the "ancient Church," than that of *Rome* was which embraced Prelacy? And, above all, how could *Calvin* say that the Church of *Geneva* was still approaching *nearer* to the "ancient Church" in *discipline*, and was likely to *surpass* it? Was the Church of *Geneva* then growing more *prelatical?* No one ever supposed it. The truth is, by *discipline*, *Calvin* and *Sadolet* both mean the system of rules for directing the *whole christian conduct* both of ministers and people. There is nothing in this part of the argu-

ment that has the least reference to different *orders* in the ministry.

It turns out, then, that this famous extract from the Letter to *Sadolet* has nothing to do with the question in dispute; that the tenor of the Letter, so far as it bears on Prelacy, is directly opposed to it; that the *Vetus Ecclesia*, the "ancient Church," intended by *Calvin*, is not, as he himself expressly declares, the Church as it was left by the Apostles, but as it stood in the *third* and *fourth* centuries; that the *discipline* of which he speaks, has no reference to orders in the Christian ministry; and, of course, that the boasted passage in question could never have been quoted as affording the least hint in favour of Prelacy, excepting by those who had never read the whole letter, or grossly perverted its evident meaning. With the latter, I do not charge Dr. *Bowden* or Mr. *How*. I take for granted they have never read a sentence of the Letter, excepting the detached passage under consideration. They have been led astray by others, probably as little acquainted with it as themselves.

The other passage which Mr. *How* quotes as positive proof that *Calvin* believed in the divine institution of Prelacy, is taken from his Tract *De Necessitate Reformandæ Ecclesiæ*, as follows. "If "they (the Papists) would exhibit to us an hierarchy, "in which the Bishops should be so distinguished, "as not to refuse subjection to Christ; then I will "confess that they are worthy of all anathemas, if "any such there be, who would not reverence it,

" and submit themselves to it with the utmost obe-
" dience*."

This passage, when impartially examined, will be found as little to the purpose as the former. It is only saying, that *Calvin* stood ready to approve of a *scriptural* and *primitive* Episcopacy, whenever it should be introduced. And would not all *Presbyterians*, as well as *Calvin*, say the same thing? Nay, blessed be God! we can go further. It is the happiness of our Church that we HAVE SUCH AN EPISCOPACY, and we glory in having it. *Calvin* never denied that there were *Bishops* in the days of the Apostles. No Presbyterian ever denied it. It is for *such* an Episcopacy as was established by inspired men in *Jerusalem*, *Ephesus*, *Antioch*, and *Philippi*, that we contend; and the venerable Reformer of *Geneva* meant no other.

It has been said that *Calvin*'s employing the word *hierarchy (hierarchiam)* in this passage, proves that he referred with approbation to an ecclesiastical constitution embracing *different orders* of clergy. It has been even asserted, that this word is *exclusively appropriated* to government by Prelates; and that no instance can be found of its application to any other kind of ecclesiastical regimen. This is a total mistake. The word *hierarchy* simply implies *sacred* or *ecclesiastical government*. It may be applied with as much propriety to *Presbyterianism* or *Independency*, as to *diocesan*

* *J. Calvini Tractatus Theologici*, p. 69.

Episcopacy. It has been often so applied by the best writers. But, what settles the matter is, that *Calvin* himself so applies it. In his *Institutions*, Lib. iv. Cap. 5. he speaks of "that *hierarchy* or *spiritual government*," which was left in the Church by the Apostles, and which he expressly declares, in the same chapter, to have been Presbyterian in its form. Many other instances might be produced in which this Reformer has used the same word in a similar sense. When gentlemen undertake to interpret *Calvin*, and especially to speak with so much positiveness of his meaning, they ought to have some acquaintance with his writings.

Where now, let me ask, is the proof of which my opponents speak so much, and so confidently, that *Calvin* believed in the divine institution of Prelacy; that he lamented the want of it in *Geneva;* and that he justified himself by the plea of *necessity*, in establishing Presbyterian government in that Church? It is not to be found. No such proof exists. They have not produced a syllable which looks like it. Nor do I believe that they *can* produce a solitary scrap, from all his voluminous writings, nor any well attested declaration*, made *at any period of his public life*, which will bear such a construction.

* I say *well attested*, because the story which Dr. *Bowden* gravely repeats of *Calvin*, *Bullinger*, &c. having written to *Edward* VI, in 1549, "offering to make him their defender, and to have Bishops in their Churches, for better unity and concord," is *not* so attested. I think no impartial reader can

The truth is, *Calvin* never pretended any such necessity. On the contrary, he steadfastly represented the *Genevan* form of government and discipline, as strictly agreeable to the word of God, and as that which he felt himself bound, by obedience to Christ, to establish and defend. "Besides," says he, "that our conscience acquits us in the sight of "God, the thing itself will answer for us in the "sight of men. Nobody has yet appeared that "could prove that we had *altered* any *one thing*, "which God has commanded; or that we have "appointed any *new* thing, contrary to his word; "or that we have *turned aside* from the truth, to "follow any evil opinion. On the contrary, it is "manifest that we have reformed our Church "MERELY BY GOD'S WORD, which is the *only rule* "by which it is to be ordered, and lawfully defended. It is, indeed, an unpleasant work to alter "what has been formerly in use, were it not that "the order which God has once fixed, must be esteemed by us as sacred and inviolable; insomuch "that if it has, for a time, been laid aside, it must

peruse the account, as given by *Strype*, (the most respectable authority quoted in support of it,) without suspecting the whole to be a fable. Let us see the Letter; and we will answer to the charge. But even admitting this to be *true*, to what does it amount? Why, that *Calvin*, in an evil hour, made a concession with respect to *Prelates*, similar to that which *Melancthon* had made before him, with respect to the *Pope*; and that in direct opposition to all his solemnly declared principles, and uniform practice.

" of necessity, (and whatever the consequences " should prove,) be restored again. No antiquity, " no prescription of custom, may be allowed to be " an obstacle in this case, that the government of " the Church which God has appointed, should " not be perpetual, *since the Lord himself has once* " *fixed it**."

So much for the opinion of *Calvin* on the subject of *Episcopacy*. I shall now proceed to take notice of some other allegations which Dr. *Bowden* has made concerning this great man, and which are as destitute of foundation as those which have been already refuted.

Doctor *Bowden* asserts, on the authority of Dr. *Leaming*, that *Calvin* never was *ordained;* and represents that gentleman as having derived his information from *Beza*. The Doctor has suffered himself to be led astray, by an ignorant or dishonest guide. *Beza* says no such thing. On the contrary, after informing us that *Calvin* had frequently preached while he was yet a youth, in the communion of the Church of *Rome*, and that he did this, without having received any *Popish* orders; *Beza* proceeds to state that he was set apart *(designatus)* to the ministry by the *Presbytery of Geneva*, in the month of August, in the year 1536†. Besides, even if there were no record establishing the time

* *Epist. ad quendam Curatum; in Calvin. Epist.* p. 386.

† See *Beza's Life of Calvin.*

and place of his ordination, we might fairly presume that such a solemnity had taken place, because it was the general sentiment of the Reformers that ordination by the imposition of hands is both scriptural and necessary; because this mode of constituting the ministry is well known to have been the *habit* of the times; because *Calvin* in his *Institutions*, published only a few weeks before he went to *Geneva*, expressly enjoins ordination in this manner; and because, in the confession of the French Churches, which he drew up a short time afterwards, such ordination is declared to be essential to a regular ministry. Now is it credible, that *Calvin*, when it was perfectly within his reach, would have suffered himself, under all the circumstances which have been mentioned, to be without that seal of office, which habit and public opinion imperiously demanded, and which both before and after, he himself represented as so highly important? It is not credible. We should be bound, on every principle of probability, to take for granted that he was regularly ordained, even if no hint had ever been given on the subject by a single writer.

But we have other evidence that *Calvin* was regularly ordained. *Junius*, the learned professor of Divinity in the University of *Leyden*, before mentioned, who was a contemporary with *Calvin*, explicitly states the fact. *Bellarmine* had asserted that, before *Calvin*, *Presbyters* had not undertaken to *ordain*. *Junius* contradicts him; asserts that the Reformers who preceded *Calvin*, held and prac-

tised Presbyterian ordination; and declares that by some of these, "his predecessors, *Calvin* was himself ordained*." And Cardinal *Bellarmine*, speaking of the validity of ordinations as performed in the Protestant Churches, says, "Neither *Luther*, nor *Zuingle*, nor *Calvin* were *Bishops*, but only *Presbyters*." *Neque Lutherus, neque Zuinglius, neque Calvinus Episcopi fuerunt, sed tantum Presbyteri*†. Neither the learning nor the talents of this celebrated Papist will be denied. He lived at the same time with *Calvin*, and must have known his history; and he had as strong temptation, as Dr. *Bowden* can have, to degrade both the personal and ecclesiastical character of that Reformer; yet he explicitly concedes that he was reputed a *Presbyter*.

But supposing the fact established that he never was ordained, either in the Presbyterian, the Episcopal, or any other mode. What then? It has no more to do with the argument in question than with the remotest speculation in mathematical or physical science. Has *Calvin* been the ordainer of all Presbyterian ministers since he entered the Church? Did he ever undertake, *alone*, to ordain even a single minister? It is one of the numerous advantages of Presbyterianism that it affords much

* *Fr. Junii Animadversiones in Bellarm. Controv.* v. Lib. 1. Cap. 3. 19.

† *Bellarmin. Controv.* v. Lib. Cap. 3.

greater security against spurious ordinations, than Episcopacy. It vests the power of ordaining, not in a *single* man, but in a *Presbytery;* so that a case can never occur, among us, in which a defect of ecclesiastical character in an individual, can vitiate an ordination.

But Dr. *Bowden* not only denies that there is any evidence that *Calvin* was ever *ordained;* he even goes so far as to express a very serious doubt whether the Reformers ever considered him in the light of a *minister* at all. Instead of taking up your time to express my surprise at a suggestion so extraordinary, I shall content myself with presenting two or three testimonies, which will show how *Calvin* was viewed by contemporary English Divines.

The celebrated Martyr, *Philpot*, a very eminent Divine of the Church of England, who suffered for the truth in the reign of Queen *Mary*, said to his Popish judges—"Which of you is able to answer *Calvin's Institutions*, who is *Minister* of *Geneva?* I am sure you blaspheme that *godly man*, and that *godly Church* where he is *Minister*, as it is your church's condition, when you cannot answer men by learning, to oppress them with blasphemies and false reports. For in the matter of *Predestination*, he *(Calvin)* is in no other opinion than all the doctors of the Church be, agreeing with the Scriptures." On a subsequent examination he declared—"I allow the Church of *Geneva*, and the doctrine of the same; for it

" is *una, catholica*, et *Apostolica*, and doth follow " the doctrines which the Apostles did preach: " and the doctrine taught and preached in King " *Edward*'s days was also according to the " same*."

Bishop *Jewel*'s opinion of *Calvin* and of *Calvinism* will appear from the following declarations. His antagonist *Harding*, a virulent Papist, is continually reviling the Bishop as a disciple of *Calvin*, and the English Protestants as *Calvinists*. The Bishop never disavows the charge, and repeatedly defends *Calvin* in terms of high respect. " Touch- " ing Mr. *Calvin*," says he, " it is a great wrong " untruly to report so reverend a Father, and *so a worthy an ornament of the Church of God*. If " you had ever known the order of the Church at " *Geneva*, and had seen four thousand people or " more receiving the holy mysteries together at " one communion, you could not, without great " shame and want of modesty, thus untruly have " published to the world that, by Mr. *Calvin*'s " doctrine, the sacraments of Christ are super- " fluous†."

Bishop *Hooper*, when he was imprisoned for his adherence to the truth, in the reign of Queen *Mary*, wrote in the most friendly and affectionate manner to *Calvin*, addressing him in terms of profound respect for his *ecclesiastical*, as well as his *per-*

* *Book of Martyrs*, Vol. III. *Philpot's Examinations.*

† *Jewel's Defence of his Apology*, Part II. p. 188.

sonal character, and begging *his*, and his *Church's* prayers.

Bishop *Hall*, though not a contemporary of *Calvin*, yet lived so near his time, as to be perfectly acquainted with the light in which he was viewed by the English Reformers. Speaking of him, he says, " That the *Latin* or *Western* Church, subject " to the Romish tyranny (unto the very times of " *Luther*) was a true Church, in which a saving " profession of the truth of Christ was found, our " learned Dr. *Field* hath saved me the labour to " prove, by the suffrages of our *best* and *most re-* " *nowned* DIVINES, among whom he cites *Calvin*, " *Bucer*, *Melancthon*, *Beza*, &c." Here Bishop *Hall* not only acknowledges the illustrious Reformer of *Geneva*, as one of the *best* and *most renowned of Divines;* but even places him *at the head* of the list!

Dr. *Bowden* asserts, that soon after the Reformation commenced in *England*, *Calvin* made an *officious offer* of his services, to aid the cause in that country; that the English Reformers, knowing his " arrogant" and " tyrannical" spirit " civilly *rejected* his offer;" and that this " displeased " him to such a degree, that although he had be- " fore spoken handsome things of the Church of " *England*, yet from that time he began to say " harsh things of her." Here again, I am compelled to say, Dr. *Bowden* shows himself to be entirely unacquainted with facts; and with facts too,

which he might have learned from his own historians.

The truth is, the services of *Calvin* in the cause of the Reformation, instead of being obtrusively and officiously *offered* by him, were expressly and warmly *solicited* by Archbishop *Cranmer*. This is attested so decidedly by the most impartial historians, that the only wonder is, how a gentleman of Dr. *Bowden*'s character, could stoop to be the retailer of so stale a calumny as the opposite story unquestionably is. In the reign of *Edward* VI, as *Strype* tells us, Archbishop *Cranmer* having formed a plan of drawing up a book of articles, which should comprehend every thing essential relating to faith and practice, and in which all Protestants might unite; sent letters to *Calvin*, *Bullinger*, and *Melancthon*, disclosing his pious design, and requesting "their counsel and furtherance." *Calvin* wrote repeatedly and freely to the Archbishop on this subject; and, in the course of his correspondence, took the liberty of gently imputing blame to *Cranmer* for not having made greater progress in the Reformation. *Cranmer* does not appear, however, to have been at all offended with *Calvin* for this freedom, but retained a high esteem and value for him, and kept up an affectionate intercourse with him to the end of life*.

Archbishop *Cranmer*, not only kept up a friendly communication with *Calvin*, as long as he lived;

* *Strype*'s *Memorials of Cranmer*, p. 407—411.

but he also constantly *consulted* him, on all the leading questions connected with the Reformation. On a certain occasion, *Calvin* dispatched a messenger to *England*, with Letters to the Duke of *Somerset*, and likewise to King *Edward*, to whom he presented, at the same time, a volume of his Commentary, just before published, and dedicated to the King. Both the King and his Council were much gratified with this communication; and Archbishop *Cranmer*, in particular, was so much pleased, as to send word to *Calvin*, that he could do nothing more profitable to the Church, than to write often to the King*.

Nor is this all. *Calvin* was not only respectfully *consulted* by the English Reformers; but he had also much *influence* among them. That great deference was paid to his judgment, will appear from this fact, that on the first appearance of the *English Liturgy*, it prescribed *praying for the dead*, *chrism*, *extreme unction*, and other Popish superstitions. These *Calvin*, in a letter to the *Protector*, very frankly and decidedly blamed. The consequence of which was, that all these offensive things were left out, agreeably to his advice. Dr. *Heylin* himself declares that these alterations were made in compliance with *Calvin*'s wishes.—"The first *Liturgy*," says he, "was discontinued, and the second superinduced upon it, to give satisfaction

* *Strype's Memorials of Cranmer*, p. 413. Also *Christian Observer*, Vol. III. p. 628.

" unto *Calvin*'s cavils, the curiosities of some, and " the mistakes of others, his friends and follow- " ers*." And Dr. *Nichols* gives us the same information. " Four years afterwards," says he, " the Book of Common Prayer underwent another " review; wherein some ceremonies and usages " were laid aside, and some new prayers added, " at the instance of Mr. *Calvin* of *Geneva*, and " *Bucer*, a foreign Divine, who was invited to be a " Professor at *Cambridge*†."

Nor was the authority of *Calvin* without its influence, in drawing up the *Articles* of the Church of *England*. It is commonly said, by our Episcopal brethren, that those Articles are *anti-Calvinistic;* and that especially on the doctrine of *Predestination*, as exhibited in the *seventeenth* Article, the Reformers held, and meant to express, a different opinion from that of *Calvin*. Now it happens that this article itself bears the most unquestionable internal evidence of the contrary. The qualifying clause toward the end of it, which has been quoted as decisive proof that the framers rejected *Calvinism*, is nearly copied from *Calvin*'s *Institutes;* and the latter part of it is a *literal translation* of that Reformer's caution against the *abuse* of this doctrine. For evidence of the former, see his *Institutes* iii. 2. 4. 5. compared with the article. For proof of the latter, read the following—*Pro-*

* *History of the Presbyt.* p. 12. 207.

† *Comment. on the Book of Com. Prayer*, Pref. p. 5.

inde, in rebus agendis, ea est nobis perspicienda Dei voluntas quam verbo suo declarat. Instit. 1. 17. 5. "Furthermore, in our doings, that will of God is "to be followed, which we have expressly declared "to us in the *word* of God." *Art.* 17th.

Of the point of light in which *Calvin* and his opinions were viewed by the leading Divines of the Church of *England*, during the reigns of *Elizabeth*, and *James* I, the following attestation by Dr. *Heylin*, a bitter enemy, affords the most unquestionable evidence. "It cannot be denied but that, "by the error of these times, the reputation which "*Calvin* had attained to in both Universities, and "the extreme diligence of his followers, there was "a *general tendency* unto his opinions; his Book "of *Institutes* being, for the most part, the foun-"dation on which the young divines of those days "did build their studies*." Again he declares, "Of *any* men who publicly opposed the *Calvinian* "tenets, in the University of *Oxford*, till after the "beginning of King *James*'s reign, I must confess "that I have hitherto found no good assurance." He speaks of *two* divines, of inferior note, who *secretly* propagated other principles; and compares these to the Prophet *Elijah*, who considered himself as left alone to oppose a whole world of idolaters. Further; in the reign of *Charles* I, more than 60 years after the final settling of the Articles, when a suppression of the Calvinistic

* See *Heylin's Quinq. Hist. Works.* p. 626, &c

doctrines was contemplated by Archbishop *Laud*, Dr. *Heylin* acknowledges, that such was the *general attachment* of the Bishops and Clergy to these doctrines, that the Arminian party did not dare to "venture the determining of these points to a Convocation," And he again explicitly informs us, that, from the resettling of the Church under Queen *Elizabeth*, to the period already mentioned, "the maintainers of the anti-Calvinian doctrines were but *few* in number, and made but a very *thin* appearance*." In short, the sum of his representation, compared with other historians, is, that for 60 years after the Articles were settled, only *four* or *five* anti-Calvinistic divines appeared, in both Universities, and the whole nation; that out of this number *three* were actually *punished* for propagating their opinions; and that the rest only saved themselves by silence, and discretion†!

The celebrated *Hooker* would have abhorred the thought of joining with Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* in their aspersions of *Calvin*. That truly great man, with all his Episcopal prejudices, speaking of the Reformer of *Geneva*, thus expresses himself. "I think him the wisest man that ever the "French Church did enjoy, since the hour it enjoyed him. His bringing up was in the study "of the civil law. Divine knowledge he gathered, "not by hearing or reading, so much as by teach-

* See *Heylin's Quinq. Hist. Works.* p. 626, &c. See also his *Life of Laud*, 147.

† See *Overton's True Churchman*, p. 81, 82, 83.

ing others. For though thousands were debtors "to him, as touching knowledge in that kind; yet "he to none, but only to God, the author of that "most blessed fountain, the Book of Life; and of "the admirable dexterity of wit, together with the "helps of other learning, which were his guides." In another place, *Hooker* speaks of *Calvin* as "a worthy vessel of God's glory." And again he remarks, "Two things of principal moment there "are, which have *deservedly* procured him *honour* "*thoughout the world;* the one his exceeding pains "in composing the *Institutions of Christian Reli-* "*gion;* the other, his no less industrious travails "for exposition of Holy Scripture according unto "the same *Institutions**."

Bishop *Carleton* in his *Examination of Montague's Appeal,* printed in 1626, and dedicated to *Charles* I, says, p. 97. "As for *Calvin*, his name "and doctrines are made odious; but why, I know "not. What greater pleasure can a man procure "to the enemies of the *truth*, than to speak evil "and odiously of those men whose service God "hath used, and made them *excellent instruments* "to make the *truth* known unto us? Some take "it for a sign of looking toward *Popery*, when the "members of our own Church offer such a service to "the Papists, as to speak evil of *them* that have "been the greatest enemies of Popery, the greatest "propagators of the *truth.*"

* *Preface to his Ecclesiastical Polity.*

Dr. *Hakewell*, chaplain of *Charles* I, while Prince of *Wales*, in a work addressed to Dr. *Carier*, a Papist, says, p. 135. "One of the main points "you drive at is, to put us off from all fellowship, "and communion with those Churches who ac- "knowledge *Calvin* to have been an excellent in- "strument of God, in abolishing and suppressing of "Popery, and the clearing and spreading of his "*truth;* that so, being separated from them, we "may either stand single, and be encountered alone, "or return again to our old bias, and relapse unto "*Rome;* and so, through *Calvin*'s sides, you strike "at the throat and heart of our Religion."

Dr. *Joshua Hoyl*, Professor of Divinity in Trinity College, Dublin, in the reign of *Charles* I, in his *Rejoinder to Mr. Malone's Reply on the Real Presence*, dedicated to Archbishop *Usher*, in p. 654, &c. says—"That great instrument of God's glory, *John Calvin*, a man of whom I had almost said, as once it was of *Moses*, there arose not a prophet since like him in *Israel*, nor since the Apostles' days was before him—His works shall praise him for wit, eloquence, fulness, and *soundness of divinity*."

On this part of the subject I shall content myself with one witness more. A clergyman of the Church of *England*, now living, who writes in the *Christian Observer*, in speaking of the disposition of many in his own Church, to vilify the name and opinions of *Calvin*, makes the following remarks.—"Few names stand higher, or in more deserved

" pre-eminence, amongst the wise and pious mem-
" bers of the English Church, than that of Bishop
" *Andrews.* His testimony to the memory of *Cal-*
" *vin* is, that he was ' an illustrious Person, and ne-
" ver to be mentioned without a preface of the
" highest honour.' Whoever examines into the
" sermons, writings, &c. of our Divines, in the
" reign of *Elizabeth*, and *James* I, will continual-
" ly meet with epithets of honour with which
" his name is mentioned; the *learned*, the *wise*,
" the *judicious*, the *pious Calvin*, are expressions
" every where to be found in the remains of those
" times. It is well known that his *Institutes* were
" *read and studied in the Universities, by every*
" *student in divinity*, for a considerable portion of
" of a century; nay, that by a Convocation held
" at *Oxford*, that book was recommended to *the*
" *general study of the nation.* So far was the
" Church of *England*, and her chief divines from
" countenancing that unbecoming and absurd treat-
" ment, with which the name of this eminent Pro-
" testant is now so frequently dishonoured, that it
" would be no difficult matter to prove, that there
" is not, perhaps, a parallel instance upon record,
" of any single individual being equally and so un-
" equivocally venerated, for the union of wis-
" dom and piety, both in *England*, and by a
" large body of the foreign Churches, as *John*
" *Calvin.* Nothing but *ignorance* of the ecclesias-
" tical records of those times, or resolute *preju-*
" *dice*, could cast a cloak of concealment over this

" fact. It has been evidenced, by the combined " testimony both of enemies and friends to his " system of doctrines*."

Dr. *Bowden*, not content with aspersing the *opinions* of *Calvin*, goes further, and attacks, with great apparent cordiality, his *personal character*. Besides a number of reproachful epithets, which the Dr. throws out in various parts of his work, the following passage occurs toward the close. *Letter* 20. " The return of *Calvin* evinced the *gentle* sway " of Presbytery. *Castellio*, (he probably means " *Castalio*,) a man of great learning, was soon ex- " pelled, at the instigation of the Reformer. A " violent contest then took place between him and " the Senate, about the election of a minister. It " produced almost sedition. *Calvin*'s quarrels with " *Perinus* proceeded to such a length that the Coun- " cil became furious against one another. And " what do you think was the cause of it? Why " *Perinus* thought it no harm to recreate himself " now and then with dancing. But *Calvin*, al- " though no Bishop, played the tyrant, and forbad " that amusement upon pain of excommunication. " *Perinus* was not to be treated in that manner. " He opposed such tyranny; and two of the mi- " nisters who joined with him, were turned out of " their livings. The contention became general " throughout the city, and the Council, taking dif- " ferent sides, almost cut one another's throats.

* *Christian Observer*, Vol. II. p. 143.

" One person was put to death for libelling *Calvin.*
" Another was banished the city for preaching
" against Predestination. *Servetus* was burned
" for heresy. So much for the mother Church of
" Presbytery."

It is easy, in half a line, to convey a slander which it would require several pages to expose. I cannot help regretting that Dr. *Bowden* has permitted himself to believe and to retail all the unfounded charges against *Calvin*, which were first propagated by malice, and which ignorance and prejudice have, ever since, continued to repeat. It is impossible here to enter into a full refutation of these charges. I can only suggest a few hints for aiding those who have a disposition further to pursue the inquiry.

With respect to the case of *Castalio*, it is thus related by M. *Sennebier*, one of the most respectable biographers of *Calvin*, and whose testimony is entitled to the more credit, as he was an opponent of that Reformer's religious principles. " *Calvin*
" knew *Castalio* at *Strasburg*, in 1539. He pro-
" cured for him the place of Regent in *Geneva*, in
" 1543. This man, who was a good humanist,
" but an extravagant theologian, translated the Bi-
" ble into Latin. He endeavoured to make the
" Hebrews speak the language of *Cicero;* and even
" essayed to make them sometimes sigh the ten-
" der verses of *Ovid.* On this account *Calvin*
" strongly blamed his version, together with diffe-
" rent sentiments which this singular man did not

" fear to advance. *Castalio*, feeling hurt, demand-
" ed of the Council permission to dispute *publicly*
" with *Calvin* on the descent of Jesus Christ into
" hell. They refused him this permission. But
" from love to truth, and from regard to liberty of
" thought, they permitted him to open this dispute
" before the assembly of ministers. It continued
" a long time without any success. *Castalio* was
" so irritated, that he attacked *Calvin* in a Sermon
" destined to resolve the objections that could be
" opposed to the doctrine which he had taught;
" and he so grossly insulted the ministers of *Gene-*
" *va*, that the Council deposed him from the holy
" ministry, and took from him the place of Regent.
" *Castalio* retired to *Basil*, where he persisted in
" his extraordinay sentiments, and in his hatred
" of *Calvin*, until his death*."

The conduct of *Calvin*, in the case of *Perrin*, is thus stated, by the same writer. " *Calvin*, in the
" exercise of discipline, saw only the man who
" had violated his duties, in the man in office, who
" had believed that he might be dispensed from
" them. He caused to be cited before the Con-
" sistory the wife of the Captain-General, *Ami*
" *Perrin*, who had *danced, acted in a comedy*, and
" *blasphemed* in a particular house. *Ami Perrin*
" himself, whose life was *very irregular*, was ex-
" communicated, deprived of his office of counsel-
" lor, and condemned to two months imprison-

* *Sennebier's Histoire Litcraire de Geneve*, Tom. 1. p. 196, 197

" ment. But, though this man had always instiga-
" ted the enemies of *Calvin;* though he had caus-
" ed all the difficulties that *Calvin* experienced at
" *Geneva* from the government; *Calvin*, neverthe-
" less, employed his eloquence and his influence to
" cause the judgment against him to be annulled;
" and had the christian satisfaction of seeing his
" mortal enemy restored to his offices, and delive-
" red from prison*."

" One person," says Dr. B. " was put to death for libelling *Calvin.*" This wonderful assertion refers to the case of *James Gruet*, who was beheaded *July* 26, 1547. He was a man notorious for his vice and profligacy—He, of course, hated *Calvin*, and abused him in the most violent manner. But this was not the cause of his death. In his sentence he is condemned, " For having spoken with
" contempt of religion; for having maintained
" that *divine* and *human* laws were the work of *ca-*
" *price;* for having writtẽn *impious letters*, and *li-*
" *bertine verses;* for having maintained that *forni-*
" *cation* was *not criminal*, when the two parties
" were agreed; for having laboured to overturn
" ecclesiastical ordinances, and to shake by a peti-
" tion the authority of the Consistory; for having
" *threatened* the Reformers and ministers, and ha-
" ving spoken ill of them, especially of *Calvin;* for
" having written letters calculated to irritate the
" court of *France* against *Calvin*, and having en-

* *Senneb. Lit. Hist.* 1. 200.

" gaged the King of *France* to write to the Coun-
" cil against him; and, finally, for having *threat-*
" *ened* the Council itself*."——Do you not ad-
mire the candour and impartiality of Doctor *Bow-*
den?

The Doctor proceeds—" Another was banish-
" ed the city for preaching against Predestination."
This was the noted *Jerome Bolsec*, of whom Dr.
Watkins, an Episcopal clergyman, in his *Biogra-*
phical Dictionary, gives the following account,—
" He was an infamous renegado, who, from being
" a *Carmelite*, turned Protestant, practised for some
" time as a physician, and married. He went to
" *Geneva*, and abandoned physic for theology; but
" having avowed the doctrines of *Pelagius* in a
" public discourse, which was answered by *Cal-*
" *vin* on the spot, the magistrates, on account of his
" turbulent conduct, banished him from the city:
" on which he retired to *Berne*, where he raised a
" great deal of disturbance, and was then driven
" from that city. He returned after this to *France*,
" and went back to his old communion (that of
" *Rome;)* and, by way of showing the sincerity of
" his conversion, wrote what he called the *Lives*
" of *Theodore Beza*, and *John Calvin*, filled with
" the blackest falsehoods, and expressed in the
" most abusive language. He lived in a profligate
" manner, and suffered his wife to prostitute her-
" self for gain." *Sennebier* also informs us that

* *Lit. Hist* 1. 202.

Bolsec, having adopted the sentiments of *Pelagius*, came to publish them at *Geneva* as a *missionary*. He was censured by the ministers, and banished by the Council, after useless attempts to silence him.—This is the man whose part Doctor *Bowden*, more than once, indirectly takes, for the purpose of blackening the character of the venerable *Calvin!*

The case of *Servetus*, which has furnished to the revilers of *Calvin* a favourite theme of declamation, for near two hundred years, Dr. *Bowden* could not have been expected either to forget, or to pass in silence. He has noticed it in the usual style; and charged it to the "tyrannical spirit" of *Calvin*, and the "*gentle* sway of Presbytery." On this accusation I will only offer the following remarks.

First; it has never been shown that the death of *Servetus* can be justly imputed to *Calvin*. *Sennebier*, though no *Calvinist*, assures us that the imputation is a cruel calumny; that the bitterest enemies of *Calvin*, who were contemporary with him, did not dare to advance it; and that it has been since repeated and believed, only by those who were ignorant of facts. He declares that *Calvin*, so far from desiring the death of this arch-heretic, was anxious to prevent it; that he warned him against coming to *Geneva*, and apprized him, that if he did come thither, he would probably lose his life; which he concluded must be the case from the spirit of the laws and government of that city. This writer further asserts, that the Council of *Geneva*, before passing sentence on *Servetus*, asked

the advice of the Swiss Cantons, who *unanimously* exhorted them to put him to death. And, finally, he informs us, that after sentence had been passed on *Servetus*, *Calvin* laboured to procure a mitigation of it, but without effect; and that he sincerely deplored his fate*. If this statement be true, and the author supports it by a reference to undoubted authorities; then the representation of Dr. *Bowden*, or rather of those revilers of *Calvin* whom he has followed, is something worse than ungenerous.

But, *Secondly;* supposing the fact to be as Doctor *Bowden* insinuates. Supposing it established that *Calvin* fully *approved*, and even *procured* the death of *Servetus;* still it was evidently not so much the fault of the *man*, as *the universal delusion of the age in which he lived;* an age in which liberty of conscience was not at all, either understood or admitted, by *any* denomination of Christians; and in which the most pious, benevolent, and exemplary men, were more or less chargeable with error on this point. It is certain that *Bucer*, *Oecolampadius*, *Beza*, and even the mild and gentle *Melancthon*, approved the sentence that was executed on *Servetus*†. It is certain that Archbishop *Cranmer*, and the great body of the English Reformers, were decidedly of the opinion that he ought to have suffered death‡. And it is equally undeniable, that the pious and excellent Bishop *Hall*, solemnly pro-

* *Lit. Hist. de Geneve*, Tom. I. p. 204, &c.

† *Sennebier*. Also *Melancthon's Epistles*.

‡ See *History of Popery*, Lond. 4to. Vol. II. p. 352.

nounced, that, in that transaction, *Calvin* DID WELL APPROVE HIMSELF TO GOD'S CHURCH*. To reproach *Calvin*, therefore, for not possessing that light which no man of his age possessed; to attempt to fix a stigma upon his memory for an error into which he fell in common with all the best of his contemporaries, is certainly as unreasonable as it is unjust.

But, *finally;* why do Dr. *Bowden* and his friends take so much delight in reproaching *Calvin* for a *single* supposed instance of persecution? And why do they take so much pains to make it believed that the death of *Servetus* was the native product of the "spirit of Presbyterianism?" Have these gentlemen forgotten the history of the Church of *England?* Or do they suppose that *we* have forgotten it? Have they lost all recollection of the conduct of their boasted favourites, Archbishops *Cranmer*, *Whitgift*, and *Laud*, to say nothing of other eminent dignitaries of that Church? Or do they imagine that our memories are as politely accommodating as their own? *Calvin* is only charged with bringing *one* unhappy victim to the stake; and even this is a false charge. But it is acknowledged, even by Episcopal historians themselves, that the pious and excellent *Cranmer*, was active in dragging at least *four* persons to the flames, of whom two were *women*. In the reign of *Henry* VIII, the Archbishop is expressly said, by *Strype* and *Burnet*, to have been concern-

* See his *Christian Moderation*, Book II. Sect. 14. *Works*, Vol. III. p. 50.

ed in burning *John Lambert*, and *Anne Askew*, for those very principles which he himself afterwards embraced*. And in the reign of *Edward* VI, he is confessed, by the same historians, to have "procured the death," (as one of them expresses it,) of *Joanna Bocher*, and *George Paris*. The King was opposed to the execution of these persons, and signed the warrants for their execution with tears in his eyes, telling *Cranmer* that he did it in compliance with his persuasion, and in submission to his ecclesiastical authority; and that if it was wrong, he, (the Archbishop,) must answer for it to God†. In this representation, the Episcopal biographer, Mr. *Gilpin*, in his *Lives of the Reformers*, coucurs. "*Joan Bocher*," says he, "and *George* "*Paris* were accused, one for denying the *humanity* of Christ; the other for denying his *divinity*. "They were both tried and condemned to the "stake; and the Archbishop not only *consented* to "these acts of blood; but even *persuaded* the aversion of the young King into a compliance. Your "Majesty must distinguish, (said he, informing his "royal pupil's conscience,) between common opinions, and such as are the essential articles of faith. "These latter we must, on no account, suffer to be "opposed‡."

*Cranmer's *Memorials*, Book 1. Chap. 17. p. 65. Bishop *Burnet's History of the Reformation*, Vol. II. p. 112.

† *Hist. Ref.* II. 112.

‡ *The Lives of Reformers*, By *William Gilpin*, M. A. Vol. II. p. 99.

But it is gratifying to know, that Presbyterians, instead of delighting to load *Cranmer* with reproach, for these instances of misguided zeal, have always treated his memory with a respectful generosity. They have seldom failed to charge this part of his conduct to the *delusion of the age*, and not to the *heart of the man;* and have been ready to acknowledge, in the strongest terms, his excellent qualities, and his noble services to the Church of Christ. And it is but justice to add, that the Bishops and other leading divines of *England*, who were *contemporary* with *Calvin*, or who lived half a century after him, always treated his character with similar respect and affection, nor ever lisped a syllable in the strain of Dr. *Bowden*. To what are we to ascribe the different representation which is now so fashionable, and so industriously propagated among our Episcopal brethren? How shall we account for it, that gentlemen who abound in unqualified praises of *Cranmer*, and even of *Laud*, are not ashamed continually to reproach the memory of *Calvin*, with conduct in which they went far beyond him? Can charity herself avoid suspecting, that it is the *man* himself who is hated, more than his alleged *persecuting spirit?*

Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* both throw out many reflections on that system of doctrine which is generally called *Calvinism*. The latter, in particular, speaks of it as a "detestable" system, of which he has no language adequately to express his "abhor-

rence." It was my original intention to devote a whole letter to the consideration of this greatly misunderstood and abused system of truth. But having been already carried so much beyond the limits at first prescribed to this reply, I dare not so far tresspass on your patience as to enter into the formal discussion of a subject, which has engaged the attention of the strongest heads and best hearts that the world ever knew; and a subject as awful and difficult as it is interesting.

I cannot forbear, however, to state a few facts. And when these are calmly considered, I think your surprise at the conduct of these gentlemen, will by no means be diminished.

The *Thirty-nine Articles* of the Church of *England* are undoubtedly *Calvinistic*. This is proved, not only by the bare inspection of the Articles themselves; but also by the known sentiments of those who formed them; and by the decisive interpretation of some of the ablest Bishops, and other divines, that ever adorned that Church*.

The same *Convocation* which drew up the *Thirty-nine Articles*, reviewed, corrected, formally approved, and ordered to be published, as it now

* See *Overton's True Churchman*, passim. I know that this writer has made some mistakes. But when his work is compared with the able *Review* of it in the *Christian Observer*, an Episcopal Journal; and also with Mr. *Daubeny's* answer, and the Review of the latter, in the same Journal, the mass of evidence in support of my position will be found irresistible.

stands, the celebrated *Catechism* of Dr. *Nowell.* This *Catechism* is acknowledged, by the worst enemies of *Calvin*, to be decidedly *Calvinistic.* It is acknowledged to be so by Bishop *Cleaver*, who, a few years ago, gave a new edition of it. And yet the Convocation, which embraced all the principal dignitaries of the Church, publicly recommended it, as " a standing summary of the doctrines professed in that Church ;" and many years after it was held in such high esteem, by Archbishops *Whitgift* and *Parker*, and other cotemporary Prelates, that even *ministers* were enjoined to study it, that they might " learn true divinity from it*."

The illustrious Reformer, and Martyr, *Bradford*, a short time before he suffered, wrote and published a decidedly *Calvinistic* work on *Election* and *Predestination*, which he sent to Archbishop *Cranmer*, and to Bishops *Ridley* and *Latimer*, who all *gave it their approbation;* after which it received the approbation of " the rest of the eminent mi- " nisters in and about *London*†."

The famous *Lambeth Articles*, formed in the reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, are acknowledged by all who ever read them, to be among the most strongly *Calvinistical* compositions that ever were penned. Yet these articles were drawn up and signed by

* *Strype's Annals*, 313—316—*Life of Parker*, 122, 301.

† *Strype's Memorials of Cranmer*, p. 350. The Editors of the *Christian Observer* attest that they have seen *Bradford's* treatise, and that it is unquestionably *Calvinistic.*

Archbishop *Whitgift*, that very Prelate of whose character and principles Dr. *Hobart* frequently speaks in the most exalted terms, and whom he holds up to view as one of the most illustrious divines and fathers of the Church of *England*.—The Archbishop was assisted in this service by the Bishops of *London* and *Bangor*, and by some others. After recieving the public approbation of these dignitaries, the Articles were sent to the Archbishop of *York*, and the Bishop of *Rochester*, who also subscribed them. Thus ratified, Archbishop *Whitgift* sent them to the University of *Cambridge*, with a letter, in which he declared, "That these Articles were not to be considered as *laws* and *decrees*, but as *propositions*, which he and his brethren were persuaded were *true*, and *corresponding with the doctrine professed in the Church of England*, and established by the laws of the land*." Nor is this all. It having been suggested by some, that the Archbishop agreed to these articles, rather for the sake of *peace*, than because he *believed* them; *Strype*, his Episcopal biographer, repels the charge with indignation; declaring that such an insinuation is as *false*, as it is *mean* and disparaging to the Primate†.

We have seen also, in a foregoing part of this Letter, by the confession of *Heylin* himself, an implacable enemy of *Calvin*, that the great body of

* *Strype's Life of Whitgift*, p. 461—465.

† *Ibid.* p. 462.

the Bishops and other clergy of the Church of *England*, were *doctrinal Calvinists*, for more than half a century after the articles were formed. And we have found a modern Episcopal clergyman asserting, on undeniable evidence, that "*Calvin's Institutions* were read and studied, in both the Universities, by every student in divinity, for a considerable portion of a century; nay, that by a Convocation held at *Oxford*, that Book was recommended to the general study of the nation."

All the Delegates from the Church of *England* to the Synod of *Dort*, among whom were Bishop *Carleton*, Bishop *Hall*, and Bishop *Davenant*, formally subscribed to the five *Calvinistic* Articles drawn up and adopted by that venerable Synod. On their return home, they were attacked by a certain writer, and charged with having given countenance to error, and also with having departed from the public standards of their own Church. Against this attack they thought proper to defend themselves, and accordingly wrote a *Joint Attestation*, which contains the following passage. "Whatsoever there was assented unto, and subscribed by us, concerning the *five articles*, either in the joint synodical judgment, or in our particular collegiate suffrage, is not only warrantable by the holy Scriptures, but also conformable to the *received doctrine* of our said venerable Mother; which we are ready to maintain and justify against all gainsayers*."

* See their *Joint Attestation*.

Again, Bishop *Hall*, in a work of his own, addressing some who had charged him and other Bishops of his day, with entertaining *Arminian* sentiments as to the doctrine of *Election*, thus indignantly replies to the charge—"You add, "*Elec-*" *tion upon faith foreseen.*" What! nothing but "gross untruths? Is this the doctrine of the Bi-" shops of *England?* Have they not strongly *con-*" *futed* it, in *Papists* and *Arminians**? Have they " not CRIED IT DOWN TO THE LOWEST PIT OF " HELL† ?"

The same pious Prelate himself tells us, that, after his return from the Synod of *Dort*, where he had been an advocate of *Calvinistic* doctrine, and a warm opponent of *Arminianism*, he was distressed to find that heresy gaining ground in *England*. "Not many years," says he, "after settling "at home, it grieved my soul to see our own "Church *begin* to *sicken* of the same *disease*, "which we had endeavoured to cure in our neigh-" bours‡."

* It seems, then, that Bishop *Hall* was not only a *Calvinist* himself; but that he considered the body of English Bishops, until his time, as having been *Calvinists* also. But perhaps Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* understand this matter better than the good Bishop!

† *Defence of the Humble Remonstrance. Works.* Vol. III. 246.

‡ *Some Specialities of the Life of Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich*, written by himself—Prefixed to the 3d. vol. of his *Works*.

If all this be not conclusive testimony, that the *Thirty-nine Articles*, which Mr. *How* has recently subscribed, are *Calvinistic;* that the Reformers were *Calvinistic;* and that the great body of the English Bishops and other Clergy, were *Calvinistic* until the time of Archbishop *Laud*, then I know not what evidence can be called conclusive. And yet, Mr. *How*, with the highest praises of those Articles, and Reformers, and Prelates, and Clergy, in his mouth, does not scruple to speak of *Calvinism* in language which could scarcely be more contemptuous, or more abhorrent, if it were acknowledged to be a system of the most undisguised blasphemy! I am happy that it is not incumbent on me, either to account for this fact, or to frame an apology for it.

But you will, perhaps, ask, are there no *difficulties* to be encountered in embracing that system of evangelical truth, which is usually styled *Calvinism?* It ought not to be disguised that there *are* in this system real difficulties, which, probably, no human wisdom will ever be able to solve. But are the difficulties which belong to the system of *Arminianism*, either *fewer* in number, or *less* in magnitude? Instead of this, they are more numerous, and more serious; more contradictory to reason, more inconsistent with the character of God, and more directly opposed both to the letter and the spirit of his word. I rest in the *Calvinistic* system, with a confidence daily increasing, not only because the more I examine it, the more clearly it

appears to me to be taught in the Holy Scriptures; but also because, the more frequently and the more carefully I compare the amount of the difficulties, on both sides, the more heavily they seem to me to press against the *Arminian* doctrine.

It is easy and popular to object, that *Calvinism* has a tendency to cut the nerves of all spiritual exertion; that, if we are *elected*, there is no *need* of exertion, and if *not* elected, it will be in *vain*. But this objection lies with quite as much force against the *Arminian* hypothesis. Dr. *Bowden*, and Mr. *How*, and all *Arminians*, though they reject the doctrine of *Election*, explicitly grant that, while *some* will, in fact, be saved, *others* will, in fact, as certainly perish. Now it is perfectly plain that this position is just as liable to the abuse above stated, as the *Calvinistic* doctrine. For a man may say, "I shall either be saved, or I shall not. If I am "to be saved, no anxiety about it is necessary; "and if I am to perish, all anxiety about it will be "useless." Would these gentlemen consider this objection as a valid one against *their* creed? I presume not. But it has no more validity against *ours*. Another objection is equally common and popular. It is said, if none but the *elect* will be saved, how can God be considered as *sincere* in making the offers of mercy to *all?* The *Arminian* is just as much bound to answer this question as the *Calvinist*. He grants that all men will not, in fact, be saved; he grants, moreover, that God foreknew this from eternity; and that he not only foreknew the

general fact; but also the *particular persons* who will, and who will not, partake of salvation. How, then, we may ask the *Arminian*, is God sincere, on *his* plan, in urging and entreating all to accept of mercy? Again, it has been frequently asked, "If "none but the *elect* will be saved, is not God a "partial master, and *a respecter of persons?*" But it may be quite as plausibly and confidently asked, "How can we reconcile it with the impar- "tiality and the benevolence of God to *save* only a "part of mankind?" If salvation be his work, then, why does he not save all? Why does he make a distinction? And if it be *not* his work, then men *save themselves*. Will even Mr. *How*, with all his inveteracy against *Calvinism*, go this length?

But while all the objections which our *Arminian* brethren urge against *Calvinism*, lie with full as much force against their own system; there are others, of a still more serious nature, to which that system is liable, and which, if I were compelled to admit, would plunge me into darkness and despair.

Yes, my brethren, if I could bring myself to believe, that the infinite and eternal God has laid no *plan* in the kingdom of his grace, but has left all to be decided by *chance*, or *accident*, not knowing the end from the beginning—If I could believe that the *purposes* of Jehovah, instead of being *eternal*, are all formed *in time;* and instead of being *immutable*, are all liable to be *altered* by the changing will of his creatures—If I could suppose that,

after all the Redeemer has done and suffered, the work of redemption cannot be completed, unless perishing mortals choose to lend their arm to its aid—If I could admit the idea, that God has done nothing more than decree, in general, to save all who may happen to believe; without any *determination*, or, which is the same thing, without any *certainty*, whether *few*, or *many*, or *none*, would be thus blessed—If I could suppose that God foresaw events as *certainly future*, which he had not *unchangeably determined* to accomplish, and which, therefore, might never happen—If I could suppose that the omniscient Saviour died with a distinct *purpose* and *design* to save *all men alike*, while it is certain that *all will not* be saved—If I could embrace the opinion that real Christians are no more indebted to grace than others, having received no more than they; and that what makes *them* to differ from others is, not the sovereign goodness of God, but their own superior wisdom, strength, or merit; in other words, that they *make themselves to differ*—If I could admit the dreadful thought, that the Christian's continuance in his journey heavenward, depends, not on the immutable *love* and *promise* of his God; but on the firmness of his own strength, and the stability of his own resolutions; and, of course, that he who is the most eminent saint to day, may become a child of wrath, and an heir of perdition to-morrow—In short, if I could conceive of God as working without any providential design, and willing without any certain effect; desiring to

save man, yet unable to save him, and often disappointed in his expectations; *doing* as much, and *designing* as much, for those that perish, as for those that are saved; but after all baffled in his wishes concerning them; hoping and desiring great things, but *certain of nothing*, because he had *determined on nothing*—If I could believe these things, then, indeed, I should renounce *Calvinism;* but it would not be to embrace the system of *Arminius.* Alas! it would be impossible to stop here. I must consider the *character* of God as dishonoured; his *counsels* as degraded to a chaos of wishes and endeavours; his promises as the fallible and uncertain declarations of circumscribed knowledge and endless doubt; the best hopes of the Christian as liable every hour to be blasted; and the whole plan of salvation as nothing better than a gloomy system of possibilities and peradventures; a system on the whole, nearly, if not quite, as likely to land the believer in the abyss of the damned, as in the paradise of God.

But, while I verily believe all these shocking consequences to flow, unavoidably, from the rejection of *Calvinism;* while the *Arminian* doctrine appears to me inconsistent with itself; dishonourable to God; and comfortless to man; yet I dare not bring a *railing accusation* against those who embrace this doctrine; I dare not impute to them the consequences which have been stated. They neither acknowledge nor perceive them; and if they did, would no doubt, be as ready to abhor them as

ourselves. Nor can I cease to cherish the animating belief, as well as to offer the fervent prayer, that thousands who now reject, in words, the doctrines of *Calvinism*, and entertain invincible prejudices against the system which is generally called by that name; may, notwithstanding, for ever rejoice in these doctrines, and bless God for them, in a more enlightened, and a more happy world.

LETTER VIII.

Testimony of the Successors of the Reformers.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

BY the *Successors of the Reformers*, I mean those great and good men who adorned the Protestant Churches, and took the lead in the direction of their affairs, for sixty or seventy years after the establishment of the Reformation. Some of these excellent men have been quoted by our Episcopal brethren as witnesses in their favour; especially some of the greatest ornaments of the Dutch and French Churches. Mr. *How* speaks with confidence of their testimony, as decisively favourable to his system; and Dr. *Bowden*, by referring, with approbation, to what Dr. *Hobart* has advanced on this part of the controversy, virtually speaks the same language.

These gentlemen, in giving this representation, surely count largely on the ignorance of their readers. For although, if one might believe *Durell*, and other collectors and perverters of scraps from the writers in question, they sometimes speak like believers in the Apostolical institution of prelacy;

yet when we come to peruse their works, and especially to examine the passages in which they formally deliver their opinion on this subject, we shall find them, almost with one voice, speaking a language directly opposite to that which is ascribed to them.

The truth is, when the Nonconformists in *England*, after the establishment of the Reformation, began to revolt from the Episcopal hierarchy, and to oppose its unscriptural pretensions, a number of the Bishops, and other divines of the established Church in that country, wrote to some of the most eminent Presbyterian divines of the foreign Reformed Churches, soliciting their influence, and the authority of their names, to quiet the minds of the discontented. In answer to solicitations of this kind, some of the foreign divines wrote letters, in which they spoke politely and respectfully of the Church of *England;* and plainly expressed an opinion that the Nonconformists ought not to make the point of Church government a cause of separation. Still, however, these men were Presbyterians in principle; they had solemnly subscribed Confessions of Faith, which declared ministerial parity to be the doctrine of Scripture, and the practice of the primitive Church; and when they came to discuss and decide the question concerning Prelacy, they spoke a language corresponding with their creed. And I venture to add, that for *every* concession in favour of Prelacy, which my opponents produce from the French, Dutch, Swiss,

and German divines, who succeeded to the Reformers, any man of reading might safely engage to produce *ten*, more pointed concessions from divines of the Church of *England*, in favour of Presbyterianism.

It would be perfectly easy to fill a volume with quotations in proof of what has been advanced. The following selection will be sufficient to answer my purpose. It will be clearly seen, that, as the great body of the Reformers never offered the plea of *necessity* for establishing Presbyterian parity; but steadily appealed to the word of God, and primitive usage as their warrant; so the great and excellent men who came after them, with scarcely any important exception, took the same ground, and made the same appeal.

The learned *Le Blanc*, a French Protestant divine of great eminence, who flourished in the age immediately succeeding that of the Reformation, says, "It is the most general opinion of the *Eng-* "*lish*, that Episcopacy and Presbytery, are *distinct* "offices; but *the rest of the Reformed*, as also "those of the *Augustan Confession*, (the *Luther-* "*ans,*) do *unanimously* believe that there is *no* "*such distinction* by divine right; and that the "superiority of Bishops above Presbyters is only "of *ecclesiastical right*, and has been introduced "into the Church *by degrees*. In the ages after "the Apostles, a custom was introduced, that one "of the Presbyters should be chosen, by the votes "of the whole college, to preside over the other

" Presbyters; and these, after a while, assumed " to themselves the name of *Bishops*, and, by de- " grees, gained more and more prerogatives, and " brought their *colleagues* into subjection to them, " until, at length, the matter grew up to that ty- " ranny which now obtains in the Church of " *Rome**."

The very learned *Chamier*, a French Protestant divine of great distinction, contemporary with *Beza*, has been sometimes quoted by Episcopalians, as making concessions in favour of their cause—The following quotation will show his opinion of ministerial imparity. " Prelacy was not, by those " who first began it, judged to be *absolutely* better " than Presbytery; but only in a *certain respect*. " Upon the same account we may likewise say, " that *equality among Pastors* is better in a certain " respect, viz. for the avoiding of the tyranny of " a few over the rest of their brethren, yea, of one " over all. And how great an evil tyranny is, and " how wide a gate was opened to it from the am- " bition for *this presidency*, experience hath, long " since, more than sufficiently shown†." In another part of the same work, he speaks still more strongly—" There is no one who doubts that this " custom of giving one Presbyter *a presidency* over " the rest, was introduced by good men, and upon " a good design. Would to God that it had not

* *Thes. de Grad. Minist.*

† *Panstrat.* Tom. II. Lib. 9. Cap. 14. § 11.

" rather arisen from *carnal prudence*, than from the " *direction of the Spirit!* Would to God it had " been attended with as happy and prosperous suc- " cess, as it was introduced with applause*." In the next chapter, after having shown at large how *Episcopacy* introduced the *Papacy*, he closes the account with the following remark—" Thus human " wisdom, if once it decline but a jot from the ori- " ginal truth, becomes worse and worse†."

M. *Danau*, a very eminent divine of the French Protestant Church, also contemporary with *Beza*, treating of the subject under consideration, thus writes. " So long as the *Apostolic* Constitution " continued in the Church, the Presbyters that la- " boured in the word and doctrine *differed not at* " *all* from *Bishops*. But after that, by the *ambi-* " *tion* of those who presided over other Presby- " ters, and took to themselves the name of Bishops, " the Apostolical form and discipline was abolish- " ed; then the Bishops began to be distinguished " even from those Presbyters that preached the " word; and to these Bishops, *contrary to God's* " *word*, the whole dignity was ascribed; scarcely " any part thereof being left to the Presbyters; " which thing, and the ambition of the Bishops, " did in time ruin the whole Church, as the fact " of the Papacy itself proclaims: And so the " Apostolic Episcopacy was abolished, and a *hu-*

* *Panstrat.* Lib. 10. Cap. 5. § 22.

† Ibid. Cap. 6. § 18.

" *man* Episcopacy began, from which sprang the " *satanic* Episcopacy, as it now is in the Papacy. " —The distinction of a Bishop from a preaching " Presbyter is *juris pontificii*, of Pontifician and " positive right, being brought in after the foun- " dations of the tyranny of the Bishops were laid; " but is not of divine right*."

The celebrated *Bochart*, a French Protestant divine of great learning and authority, has often been quoted by Episcopal writers, as having expressed himself in favour of Prelacy. The following declarations from his pen are found in a letter which he wrote to Dr. *Morley*, an English Bishop, who had requested his opinion on the subject. " In the " office of *Overseer* or *Bishop*, there are three " things which we must not mix together,—the " πρεσβυτερίον, i. e. the *Eldership*, or *Pastoral* office, " which *Scripture* ascribes to the Overseer or Bi- " shop;—the ὑπεροχήν, i. e. the *pre-eminence* above " other pastors, which the *ancient Church* added " to the Bishop; and the *lordship over God's heri-* " *tage* which some in these last times have stren- " uously advocated. The *first* of these is of *di-* " *vine authority;* the *second* of *ecclesiastical au-* " *thority;* and the third of neither, but a mere " *abuse*. The *first*, the Church cannot dispense " with; the *second* may be *borne;* but the *third* " ought at once to be *rooted out*."—In answer to Bishop *Morley*'s question, whether it was better

* DANÆI *Controv.* 5. Lib. 1. Cap. 14.

for the *English* Church to be governed by *Presbyters* than by *Bishops*, *Bochart* replies—"The "Episcopal government was *not* of *divine*, but *ec-* "*clesiastical appointment;* but since the English "Church has hitherto been governed by Bishops, "that form of government may and can with pro- "priety *be borne.* For every where men live; but "men cannot live every where in the same way. "As in political society some prefer being govern- "ed by *one*, and others by *many;* so it is in eccle- "siastical society. In *England* they are so accus- "tomed to Episcopal government, that though of "no divine or apostolical authority, it cannot be "dispensed with. In other places, government "by Overseers, or Ministers, or Presbyters, is "preferred. But in Churches which have never "been governed by Bishops, they may be dispens- "ed with, even though the civil government be "monarchical; since this *new institution*, of *hu-* "*man origin*, sprung merely from *pride* and *ambi-* "*tion*, and has never been of the least advantage to "the Church, which in every change of things "ought always to be contemplated. And since it "will neither diminish nor increase the glory of a "Prince, whether he receive his crown from a Bi- "shop or Pastor."—In another part of the same letter, he says—"If you ask for the opinions of "the *Ancients*, I entirely agree with *Jerome*, that, "in the Apostolic times, there was no difference "between *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, or *Elders*, and

" that the Church was governed by a common " council of Presbyters*."

In this manner did *Bochart*, unquestionably one of the most learned men of his day, speak on the subject under consideration, when his opinion was formally requested. And when it is considered that he communicated this opinion to a respectable Prelate; and, of course, had every inducement to speak as favourably of the English hierarchy as possible, the quotation carries with it peculiar weight.

But none of the writers of the Reformed Churches have been quoted, by our Episcopal brethren, with more confidence, as a witness in their favour, than the very learned and celebrated M. *Claude*. The following quotation leaves no room to doubt what were his real sentiments on the subject in dispute.

" The Apostles have left no successors in their " office, which was *unique*. It was an extraordi- " nary office; and they continue to teach and in- " struct the Church in all ages, by their writings. " The Apostles first collected Churches by their " preaching. These Churches, when assembled, " with their advice and assistance, appointed their " own *Presbyters* or *Elders*, *Overseers* or *Bishops*; " and they received the symbol, or ceremonial in- " vestiture of office, by the laying on of the hands

* See *Outhof's Verklaringe over denbrief aan Titus*. p. 294. § 210. and p. 297, 298. § 620.

" of the *Presbytery* or *Eldership:* The office itself " being conferred, and the vocation made by the " election of the Church. And so scrupulous " were the Apostles in appointing this order of " things, which was to remain in the Church, that, " even in their presence, the ordination rite was " performed by the laying on of the hands of the " Presbytery*."

Again, he says, " As to ordinations of this kind, " (by Presbyters,) can the Author be ignorant " that the distinction of Bishop and Presbyter, as " expressive of different offices, is a distinction " which not only cannot be proved by the Scrip- " tures; but which contradicts their express lan- " guage, in which it is plain that Bishop and Pres- " byter are only different names expressive of the " same office? Can this author be ignorant of the " opinion of St. *Jerome*, of *Hilary*, the Deacon, " and, after them, of *Hincmar*, which they have " so explicitly given, concerning the *unity* or *iden-* " *tity* of the office of Bishop and Presbyter, in the " earliest ages of the Church; and concerning the " origin of that distinction which afterwards took " place between them? Can he be ignorant that " St. *Augustine* himself, writing to St. *Jerome*, re- " fers that distinction, not to the primitive institu- " tion of the ministry, but merely to an ecclesiasti- " cal custom, which had since grown up? Can

* *Historical Defence of the Reformation*, 4to. Edit. 1673. P. IV. C. 3. p. 342.

" he be ignorant that some of the fathers have " taught us, that the ordination of a Presbyter and " a Bishop are strictly one and the same, and not " different kinds of acts, sufficiently expressing to " us the identity of the offices? And as to the " right of ordaining, can this author deny that St. " *Paul* speaks of *the laying on of the hands of the* " *Presbytery?* Can he deny that *Presbyters* an- " ciently ordained equally with Bishops*?" Further, " The right of ordination, therefore, is one " that *naturally belongs* to Presbyters. And since " they have been *deprived of it* by rules and con- " stitutions which are *merely of human authority*, " the right still remains essentially attached to " their office, and they may justly reclaim it, when- " ever the state of the Church will permit. And " that I may declare my opinion with freedom, it " appears to me that the *haughty* and *insolent* " opinion, which maintains the absolute necessity " of Episcopal ordinations, and, without them, an- " nihilates the Church, the ministry, and the sacra- " ments, however pure the faith, the doctrine, and " the piety of the Church may be;—thus making " religion depend on a form, and that form of " mere human invention;—I repeat it, it appears " to me that this insolent opinion carries on it the " character of a *shameful corruption;* it bears the " mark of *profound hypocrisy*, of a *pure pharisa-* " *ism*, which *strains at a gnat*, *while it swallows a* " *camel.* I cannot help having, at least, a *deep con-*

* *Histor. Def.* p. 372, 373.

" *tempt for such opinions*, and *compassion for those* " who are thus obstinate and headstrong in main- " taining them*."

In 1680, when *Owen*, *Baxter*, *Alsop*, *Clarkson*, *Howe*, and other eminent English Presbyterians, had written largely and ably in defence of their principles; the Episcopal writers, feeling themselves deficient in *argument*, made an attempt to support their cause, by soliciting some of the foreign Presbyterians to speak in their favour. For this purpose the Bishop of *London*, in that year, wrote to M. *Claude*, requesting him to give his opinion of English Presbyterianism. *Claude* returned a complaisant answer, expressing great respect for the English Church; gently blaming the Nonconformists for separating from it merely on a question of *government;* and explicitly conceding that salvation might be obtained, and every spiritual advantage received under the Episcopal regimen. Messieurs *L'Angle* and *Le Moyne*, being addressed in the same manner, wrote in a similar strain. These letters Bishop *Stillingfleet* subjoined to a work of his own, on *The Unreasonableness of Separation*, and pompously published as suffrages for Episcopacy; and ever since, they have been confidently quoted for the same purpose.

M. *Claude* complained that his Letter was published without his permission; that a construction was put upon it, which he never intended; and that a use was made of it contrary to his wishes. These

* *Histor. Def.* p. 374.

complaints were contained in Letters addressed to the Bishop of *London*, and to a Lady of his acquaintance, in the year 1681; which, however, the Episcopalians of *England* took care never to publish; and which were never given to the world until after the death of *Claude*, when they were brought to light by his son. The following extracts from these Letters will be sufficient to place the sentiments of the excellent writer in a just point of light.

" I have received the Letter which you were " pleased to send me from the Bishop of *London*, " with the book which accompanied it. I shall " have the honour to reply to the Bishop, and to " thank him for the present which he hath sent " me. Nevertheless, Madam, as I learn from dif- " ferent places, that many persons have not entire- " ly understood my sentiments and expressions, " touching the present state of the English Church, " I have believed that it would not be improper to " explain myself more particularly to you, and to " let you know the innocence of my thoughts and " intentions. *First;* I can conscientiously declare " that when I wrote on the subject to the Bishop " of *London*, it was not with the intention that my " letter should be printed, or rendered public; and " that I have even been surprised and astonished " to see it as well in *French* as in *English*, at the " end of the book which you have sent me, with " two others, one of Mons. M. and another of " Mons. A.—But besides this, be assured, Ma-

" dam, that, in what I have written, I have had " two things only in view; viz. to justify us from " a calumny which some persons imputed to us, " of believing that salvation could not be obtained " under the Episcopal government; and of aiding " as much as my weakness was capable of, a good " and holy union of the two parties. With respect " to the *first*, I believe I have, with sufficient just- " ness, explained the sentiments of all the Protes- " tants of this kingdom, and in particular, of all " those who are honoured with our character, (the " clergy.) And I am even assured that the Eng- " lish Presbyterians would not go so far as to con- " test the possibility of salvation under the minis- " try of Bishops. They have, for that, too much " light, wisdom, and christian charity. With re- " spect to the *second*, I have endeavoured to keep " all the measures which ought to be kept in so " great and important an affair as this. I have ex- " plained myself only in the form of a wish, and " in showing what I desired that the Presbyte- " rians might attentively consider. I have not been " silent with regard to the Episcopalians. I have " condemned the excesses into which some of both " parties have gone; and I have shown, as far as " my little wisdom enabled me, the reasons which " should induce both to a just and reasonable ac- " commodation*."

In a Letter to the Bishop of *London*, of the same

* *Les Oeuvres Posthumes, de M. Claude.* Tom. v. Let. 38.

date, M. *Claude* writes thus. "The Nonconform-
"ists complain, that the Episcopalians are as ar-
"dent in pursuing them with the penalties of the
"laws, as if they were adversaries and enemies.
"They complain, that your government is no less
"arbitrary and despotic with regard to dissenting
"Ministers, than that of the Bishops of the Ro-
"man communion. They complain, that you will
"receive no one to the ministry, till he acknow-
"ledges, on oath, that Episcopacy is of divine
"right, which is a *hell (Gehenne)* to the con-
"science. They complain, that, whilst you do
"not re-ordain the Roman Catholic priests who
"come to you, you do re-ordain ministers, who
"come to you from beyond the seas, in the Church-
"es of *France*, *Holland*, &c. They complain, that
"the Bishops have a rigid attachment to many ce-
"remonies which are offensive, and for which,
"nevertheless, they combat *tanquam pro aris et*
"*focis*. In the name of God, my Lord, labour
"to remove these grounds of complaint, if there
"is *any truth* in them, and if there is *not*, to give
"information of the real state of the case. And
"let all *Europe* know, that there is nothing which
"the glory of God, and the love of the Church
"can demand of you, that you are not ready to
"grant*."

It is evident, then, from all the documents which have come to light on this subject, that the English Bishops, in order to draw from the foreign Presby-

* *Les Oeuvres Posthumes, de M. Claude.* Tom. v. Let. 39.

terians something in their favour, sent to them a disingenuous statement of the case; that, under this deception, their answers were written; and that, as soon as they understood the real state of things, they complained of having been treated with duplicity, and declared opinions very different from those which had been imputed to them. That this was the case with M. *Claude*, is certain; and that it was also the case with his brethren, who shared in the imposition which was practised upon him, I have no doubt would appear, if we had access to their other writings.

The learned *Daillé* is also frequently quoted by zealous Episcopalians, as having made important concessions in favour of Prelacy. I cannot undertake to say that no incautious or doubtful sentence ever escaped from the pen of this illustrious Protestant, on the subject of Episcopacy; though I have never seen any which warrants the construction of our Episcopal brethren; but I may venture to assert, that no candid man can peruse his *Sermons* on the *First Epistle to Timothy*, without being convinced that he was a decided and warm advocate of *ministerial parity*, as having obtained in the Apostolic and primitive Church. To prove this, the following extracts are sufficient.

"Here the hierarchs, having their imagination "full of their grand prelatures, of their bishoprics, "their archbishoprics, and their primacies, do not "fail to dream of one in these words of the Apos- "tle. That *he besought Timothy to abide still at*

" *Ephesus*, signifies, if you believe them, that he " made *Timothy* Bishop of the Church of *Ephe-* " *sus*; and not only that, but even Metropolitan, or " Archbishop of the province; and even primate " of all *Asia*. You see how ingenious is the pas- " sion for the crosier and the mitre; being able, " in so few and simple words, to detect such great " mysteries! For where is the man, who, in the " use of his natural understanding, without being " heated by a previous attachment, could ever have " found so many *mitres*—that of a Bishop, that of " an Archbishop, and that of a Primate, in these " two words, *Paul besought Timothy to abide still* " *at Ephesus?* Who, without the help of some " extraordinary passion, could ever have made so " charming and so rare a discovery? And imagine " that to beseech a man to stay in a city, means, to " establish him Bishop of that city, Archbishop of " the province, and primate of all the country? In " very deed, the cause of these gentlemen of the " hierarchy must be reduced to an evil plight, since " they are constrained to resort to such pitiful " proofs*."

Again, he says—" St. *Paul*, and all the compa- " ny of Pastors, laid hands on *Timothy* at his or- " dination. St. *Paul* as president, and the rest as " *colleagues*, according to the practice which ob- " tains among us, where it is usual for the person " appointed by the Synod first to lay hands on him

* See his *First Sermon* on the *Epistle*.

" that is ordained; all the rest of the pastors pre-
" sent, afterwards joining with him in laying on
" their hands on the same person*."

The language of those divines of the *Lutheran* Church, who succeeded the Reformers, was not less explicit and decisive than that of the other Protestant divines of *Europe*. The following specimen of their opinions, is all that I have room to admit.

The learned *Frederick Balduin*, Professor of Divinity in the University of *Wittemberg* and a *Superintendent* in the Lutheran Church, speaking on the subject in question, expresses himself in the following manner. " Hence the *Papists* common-
" ly cry out against the pastors of our Churches,
" as if they were not legitimately ordained, be-
" cause they were not ordained by *Bishops;* and
" they assert that neither *Luther*, nor any other
" orthodox ministers, had the power of conferring
" orders, because they were not *Bishops*, but only
" *Presbyters*. But our judgment is that Bishops
" have their pre-eminence in the Church, *not by*
" *divine right*, but by a *voluntary arrangement*
" *of the Church*, which thought proper to direct
" that, for the sake of order, a Bishop, or he who
" was first in the ministry, should ordain in the
" Church; the whole Presbytery being present,
" and laying on hands at the same time; but so,

* See his 31st *Sermon* on the *Epistle*.

" however, that if the Bishop or first minister, " should *happen to be absent*, a Presbyter might " *perform the same duty* in his stead, that nothing " may be neglected in the Church. For a Bishop " is nothing more than the *first* Presbyter, as St. " *Augustine* tells us, *Quæst.* 101. *ex utroque Testam.* " Accordingly, " in *Egypt*, Presbyters ordain, if " a Bishop be not present," as *Ambrose* writes, in " his Commentary on *Ephesians* iv. " There is " nothing, therefore, wanting to the validity of our " ministry; for with respect to the difference which " the *Papists* make between a Bishop and a Pres- " byter, as if the former only had the power of or- " daining, *the Scriptures do not recognize* it. The " Scriptures ascribe the power of ordination to " the whole Presbytery, not to a single Bishop; as " the Apostle writes to *Timothy—Neglect not the* " *gift which is in thee, which was given thee by* " *prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the* " *Presbytery.* And the Apostle *Paul*, though not " inferior to a Bishop in dignity, accepted ordina- " tion from the Presbytery of *Antioch*, not from a " single Bishop; as we find related, *Acts* xii. 2. " From all which considerations we plainly infer " that the legitimacy of the ordinations in the Lu- " theran Churches, whether performed by *Luther* " or by other *Lutheran ministers*, cannot by any " means be called in question*."

* *Tractatus Luculentus de Casibus Conscientiæ.* Lib 4. Cap. 5. Cas. 4. 4to. 1628.

Another respectable authority on this subject, is the learned *C. Dieterich*, a Doctor of Divinity, and also a *Superintendent* in the Lutheran Church of *Germany*, who lived in the age immediately following that of *Luther*. He declares, that "the ordi- "nation of ministers in the Lutheran Church *is* "*by Presbyters*, and that this method of ordina- "tion has the *divine warrant*." And a little after, he remarks, "They (the *Papists*) rail against "us that we are not able to produce a regular com- "mission, because we are neither called, nor or- "dained by *Bishops*, having papal jurisdiction, nor "have any legitimate claim to the Apostolic suc- "cession. But let them rail. This is the old "*Popish tune* to which our ears have become "accustomed. Neither *Bishops* alone, nor the *Pope* "alone, have the power of ordaining ministers. The "blessed Apostles, without any parade of ceremo- "ny, were in the habit of introducing candidates "into the sacred office by fasting, prayer, and *the* "*imposition of the hands of Ministers*. We imi- "tate this Apostolic simplicity. And where men "are called, examined, ordained, and placed in "the Church, by prayer, and the laying on of the "hands of the *Presbytery*, the ministry of the "word and sacraments, the government of the "flock, &c. are committed to them. Which kind "of ordination, though not enjoined by absolute "divine command, we nevertheless judge proper "to be retained, partly because *it is conformable* "*with the practice of the primitive Church*; and

" partly on account of its salutary effects*." Again, he remarks—" Scripture knows nothing of " any difference between Presbyter and Bishop. " Those who are in one place called *Presbyters* " are, a little after, called Bishops; as in *Acts* xx. " 17. 28. St. *Jerome* shows the same thing in his " Commentary on the Epistle to *Titus*. With *Je-* " *rome* agreed *Chrysostom*, *Theodoret*, *Primasius*, " *Theophylact*, and other Fathers. Even in the " *Canon Law* the same doctrine is contained. For " it is there asserted, that, 'formerly a Presbyter " and a Bishop were the same thing.' Even *Bel-* " *larmine* does not deny this, in his work *De Cleri-* " *cis*, Lib. I. Cap. 12. for he says that the Episco- " pal pre-eminence of one was brought in *by the* " *Church*, as a remedy for schism; and quotes *Je-* " *rome* as his authority. How, then, can it be of " divine right†?"

Professor *Hulsemann*, a Lutheran Divine of great eminence, and who also lived in the age immediately following that of *Luther*, in a commentary on the *Augustan Confession*, expresses himself in the following manner. " The Bishops succeed- " ed in the place of the Apostles; not, however, " as to that which formally constituted them Apos- " tles, *Gal.* I. 1. 2 *Cor.* xii. 11, 12; but as to that " which they hold *in common with Presbyters;* for,

* *Analysis Evangeliorum.* Par. II. 47—49.

† Ibid. 61, 62.

" *by divine right, they are in no respect superior to* " *Presbyters**."

Gerhard, a Lutheran Divine of great eminence and authority, who lived a little after the time of *Luther*, though he admits that a moderate kind of Episcopacy, amounting to nothing more than a *standing moderatorship*, is *lawful*, and, in some cases, *expedient*, yet he represents it as a *mere human institution;* and explicitly speaks of the doctrine that Bishops are, by divine right, an order superior to Presbyters, and alone possess the power of ordination, as a *Popish error*†.

The works of few *Lutheran* divines hold a higher place in the esteem of the Churches of that denomination, than those of *Buddæus*, the celebrated Professor of divinity at *Leipsic*. This learned theologian makes the following statement, with regard to the government of his own Church. " The " judgment of the divines of our Church, is this, " that, among those who preside in the Church, " there is, by divine right, *no difference*, on the " score of dignity, so that *Presbyters* and *Bishops* " are *equal:* But, notwithstanding that, there is no " solid objection against introducing a certain in- " equality, on the ground of *human expediency*, and " giving to one of the ministers of the word a sort " of inspection over the rest, and, at the same time, " a certain pre-eminence of character. Neither

* *Manuale Confessionis Augustanæ vindicans eam*, &c. Autore *Johanne Hulsemanno*. p. 519, 520.

† *Loci Communes*, Tom. 6. Col. 260, 261.

" do we deny that this was the case in the ancient " Church; although the *abuse* which arose from " this, in which the Bishops usurped to themselves " a tyrannical domination, we *greatly detest.* Nor " can we be charged with having abolished the " office of Bishop in our Church, as *Henry Dod-* " *well*, and others, have reproachfully alleged " against us*; since it is plain from fact, that we " have only *restored* the office to those just limits, " and to that true character which it held in the " ancient Church. For we have not only given to " ministers of the word that power which Presby- " ters enjoyed in the *Apostolic Church*†; but to " certain of them there is allowed a kind of pre- " eminence or inspection over others. These are " called *Superintendents*, or *Presidents*, or *Inspec-* " *tors*, and, in some places, they are styled *Bi-*

* The learned *Dodwell* understood the government of the *Lutheran* Church much better than Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*. *He* thought that, on the principles of the *jure divino* prelatists, the *Lutherans* had *no Bishops* among them; and the learned *Buddæus* confesses the fact; though he contends that they have *such Bishops* as the *ancient Church* had.

† Here *Buddæus* makes a clear distinction between the *ancient church*, and the *Apostolic church*. By the *former*, he elsewhere explains himself to mean that which existed *soon after* the Apostolic age; by the *latter* he means that ecclesiastical order which the *Apostles* themselves established. In the former he admits that a moderate kind of Episcopacy was introduced by *human wisdom*, and this he says the *Lutherans* imitate. In the latter, he repeatedly and explicitly declares that ministerial parity prevailed.

" *shops**." The same writer, in the very section from which the above extract is taken, more than once remarks, that the *Papists*, and the *English Episcopalians* are equally *in error* in asserting the divine right of prelacy. He speaks of his having written two works on the *Origin and Power of Bishops*, which were particularly intended to oppose the notions of certain high-Churchmen in *England*. He declares, that it is *notorious* and *unquestionable* that *Jerome* contended zealously for the primitive equality of *Bishops* and *Presbyters*. And he also asserts, that the office of *Deacon* was, in process of time, perverted from that *guardianship of the poor* which it was expressly intended to subserve by the Apostles.

The same Divine, in his able and learned *Preface* to *Bingham's Origines Ecclesiasticæ*, adverting to *Bingham*'s high-Church opinions, makes the following declarations. " But when he asserts, fur-
" ther on, that the order of Bishops was *instituted*
" *by the Apostles*, he will have very few to join him,
" excepting the *Roman Catholics*, and the high-
" toned Episcopalians in *England*. For there is
" not only *no vestige* of such a thing to be found in
" *Scripture*; but the *very contrary* is plainly in-
" timated there, viz. that Presbyters and Bishops
" were the same thing in the Apostolic age." He then goes on to show that the *Fathers* teach no-

* *I. F. Buddæi Isagoge Historico-Theologica*, &c. Lib. II. Cap. v. § 11.

thing contrary to this; and by a number of quotations from *Ignatius*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Irenæus*, and *Tertullian*, evidently establishes his point.

I have reserved for separate consideration, the testimony of the *Synod* of *Dort;* not only because the proceedings of that venerable assembly hold a most important station in the history of the Christian Church; but also because they have been misunderstood and misrepresented by my opponents, in a manner so extraordinary as to demand particular notice. Mr. *How*, especially, has allowed himself to speak on this subject in a way for which I really feel at a loss to form an adequate apology. To suppose that it has never fallen in his way to obtain correct information respecting it, is the most favourable construction which the case seems to admit.

It is generally known, that the Synod of *Dort* sat in the years 1618 and 1619; that it was convened for the purpose of considering and deciding on the heresy of *Arminius;* that it was composed of delegates from the greater part of the Protestant Churches of *Europe;* that King *James* I. sent five delegates from the Church of *England*, to deliberate and vote in the Synod; and that of these delegates one was, at that time, a Bishop, and two others were, soon after their return home, raised to that dignity. It is also well known, that the Synod, after long and solemn deliberation, formally condemned the doctrines of *Arminius*, and adopted

those of *Calvin;* and that the English delegates concurred, with one voice, both in the condemnation of the former, and in the adoption of the latter.

In speaking of the proceedings of this Synod, in my seventh Letter, having no temptation to conceal or disguise the truth, I was careful to state, that " Bishop *Carleton*, and the other *English* delegates expressed their opinion, in the Synod, VERY FULLY in favour of the Episcopal form of government." This, however, does not satisfy Mr. *How*. He professes to quote my sentence, but adroitly leaves out the words " *very fully*," and then exclaims—" See, Sir, how you mis-state? They de-" clared *the divine right of Episcopacy*. Is there " no difference between the two modes of expres-" sion? You seem to have been aware of the ne-" cessity of concealing the true state of the case " from your readers; thus entitling yourself to the " credit, at least, of caution as an advocate, what-" ever may be thought of your candour as a man." Passing by the indelicate suggestion which this passage contains, as beneath a reply, I would only ask, where is the " *mis-statement?*" To say that they " expressed an opinion *very fully* in favour of Episcopacy," is surely a mode of speaking sufficiently strong to cover the fact, even as Mr. *How* states it. Whatever " *difference*" there may be in the two modes of expression, there is certainly no *inconsistency* between them.

Mr. *How* seems desirous of impressing on the minds of his readers, that the English delegates had been *warmly solicited* by the Dutch to attend their Synod; and complied with their solicitation, rather as a matter of *courtesy*, than of strict ecclesiastical order. He says, "The English Bishops "being *invited* to attend, *thought it would be wrong* "*to refuse the invitation;* especially as it was their "ardent wish to promote union and harmony "among protestants." Now it happens that the *solicitation* was all on the other side. The fact is, that the states of *Holland* at first intended to form the Synod of *Dort* of delegates from *their own* Churches *only:* and it was at the express *solicitation* of King *James*, (whose request was communicated and seconded by *Maurice*, Prince of *Orange*,) that eminent Divines deputed from *England*, and other reformed countries, were *admitted* to sit and deliberate in that assembly*. Had Mr. *How* been acquainted with this fact, he could not possibly have penned the above cited paragraph.

I had produced, in my seventh Letter, the conduct of the English delegates to the Synod of *Dort*, in accepting seats in that assembly, as an implied recognition of the Presbyterian Church of *Holland*, as a true Church; and of all the ministers of the continent who composed the Synod, (though

* See the *Dedication* of the *Acts of the Synod of Dort. Toplady's Works*, Vol. II. p. 253. *Christian Observer*, Vol. III. p. 632. Bishop *Hall's Works*, Vol. III. p. 15.

none of them had received Episcopal ordination,) as true ministers of Christ.—And in this judgment the Episcopal historian *Collier*, concurs. Dr. *Bowden*, however, is of opinion, that the conduct of the English delegates does by no means admit of such a construction. Mr. *How* goes further, and even ventures to affirm, that the history of the English delegation to the Synod of *Dort*, instead of affording the least countenance to the Presbyterian doctrine of parity, rather shows that the most respectable delegates to that Synod, from the different Reformed Churches, really believed in the doctrine of Prelacy by divine right; lamented their want of diocesan Bishops; and ascribed their want of this ecclesiastical regimen only to *necessity*. Nay he declares, that to attempt to construe the attendance of the English delegates as I have done, "is "as *puerile* as it is *disingenuous*." Nothing more is necessary than this simple statement to show Mr. *How*'s entire want of acquaintance with the history of that Synod, and the import of its transactions; which, indeed, he betrays in almost every sentence he has written on the subject.——Let me request your attention to the following particulars.

The ministers of the Dutch Church had it in their power, at the time of the Reformation, to retain diocesan Episcopacy, if they had thought it either scriptural or expedient. The people, for a number of centuries, had been accustomed to this kind of ecclesiastical government. The magistrates made no objection to its continuance. And

nothing would have been more easy than to obtain regular consecration for protestant Bishops. No *necessity*, therefore, of rejecting prelacy, or of adopting Presbyterian parity, in *Holland*, ever existed, or was *pretended* to exist. But such was the knowledge which the great and good Reformers, in that country, had obtained of the government, as well as the doctrines of the primitive Church, that when they broke off from Popery, they thought it their duty to restore the scriptural order, together with the primitive truth of the Church. They had seen the mischiefs of Prelacy. They knew that it had no divine authority for its support—And, therefore, when they threw off *the yoke of bondage*, they rejected this, not by any means as the *worst*, but still as *one* of the errors of the Church of *Rome*.

The Faith, Government, and Discipline of the Reformed Dutch Church were settled by a succession of National Synods, beginning with that of *Wesel* in 1568, and ending with that of *Dort* in 1618 and 1619*. The Synods held at *Wesel*, in the year above mentioned, and at *Embden*, in 1571, are considered as having formed the fundamental articles of that Church, both with respect to doctrine and government. Among the proceedings of the Synod of *Wesel*, it was ordained, in the *second* article of their acts, " That besides forming a *Consis-*

* See a brief and perspicuous sketch of the rise, progress, and principles of the Reformed church of *Holland*, in a small Book entitled, *Kerkelyk Hantboekje*, &c. i. e *Church Manual, necessary for Ministers and Consistories*. Delf. 1738.

" *tory* in every congregation, the *Netherland* Pro-
" vinces should be divided into certain *Classes*"—
And in the *third* article, they say, " As soon as it
" shall please the Lord to open a door for the free
" preaching of his word in the *Netherlands*, care
" shall be taken immediately for calling Provincial
" Synods, for arranging all matters," &c. And it is expressly added, that in these judicatories the ministers shall preside *in rotation*.—In the Synod of *Embden*, in 1571, their acts commence with the same regulation respecting Consistories, Classes, and Synods, as were stated as having passed at *Wesel*, three years before. One of their articles begins with these words—" No Church shall be
" considered as having authority over another
" Church. No minister of the Gospel shall be
" vested with power above another minister; but
" every one shall avoid the very suspicion, and
" watch against every temptation that might draw
" him to assume a superiority."

It is observable that, for the formation of these ecclesiastical judicatories, this Synod distributed the Reformed Churches into *three* great districts. One comprehended all the Churches in the Western part of *Germany*, and *Holland*, or *East-Friesland*. Another comprised what they called the *Churches under the Cross*, meaning those which were surrounded by Papists, and exposed to the persecution of Popish magistrates and ecclesiastics. And the last district which they named, took in all the *English Churches*. The 12th article, which re-

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lates to these last, is very remarkable. "And the "members of the Church of *England* shall be *ad-* "*monished* to distribute *their* Churches also into "*Classes* without any further delay." From this article it is evident, not only that the Dutch Church, at this period, was decidedly anti-Episcopal in her principles; but also that she wished and hoped to prevail on the Church of *England* to come nearer to her views of ecclesiastical government, if not to adopt them. There is peculiar emphasis in the word *admonish*, which conveys the idea of *exhortation* and *warning*, with some fear of *delinquency*.

In every succeeding national Synod down to that of *Dort*, the same Presbyterian principles were decidedly avowed and maintained, as every public document respecting them unequivocally proves. In fact, with regard to the parity of ministers, and the government of the Church by consistorial, classical, and synodical assemblies, there was not only a perfect harmony, and absolute decision, in all the Synods antecedent to that of *Dort*, but each succeeding Synod literally copied the language of the preceding; and all, with undeviating consistency, opposed prelacy, and adhered to the Presbyterian model. I challenge Mr. *How*, or any of his friends, to produce a single authentic testimony which shows that, among all the discussions and transactions of the Church of *Holland*, respecting ecclesiastical policy, there was ever so much as a *proposal* to make the government of that Church Episcopal; [redacted] a single sentence from the writings of any res-

pectable divine in her communion, which expresses a belief *in the divine right* of diocesan Episcopacy, or even *a preference* for this form of Church order.

With respect to the Synod of *Dort*, every one who is acquainted with its history, and with its published *Acts*, knows that it was entirely and exclusively Presbyterian. To assert or insinuate the contrary, is to insult the understanding of every well-informed man. The ministers who composed that Synod, were among the most learned, pious, and dignified divines that ever adorned the christian Church. In transacting the business entrusted to them, they bound themselves by the solemnity of an *oath*, to *adhere strictly to the word of God* in all their proceedings. And the indisputable fact is, that *these men*, acting under *this awful solemnity*, did, among other articles relating to Church government, form and adopt the following: "We believe "that this true Church must be governed by that "spiritual policy, which *our Lord hath taught us in* "*his word;* namely, that there must be Ministers "or Pastors, to preach the word of God, and to "administer the sacraments; also Elders and Dea-"cons, who, together with the Pastors, form the "council of the Church.——As for the ministers "of God's word, they have equally the same pow-"er and authority wheresoever they are; as they are "all ministers of Christ, the only universal Bishop, "and the only Head of the Church*."

* *Confession of Faith of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.* Articles 30 and 31.

But Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*, in the face of all this unquestionable testimony, still contend, that the principal members of the Synod of *Dort* gave their suffrage in favour of Episcopacy. In support of this assertion, they quote a laconic and equivocal reply of *Bogerman*, the President of the Synod, to Bishop *Carleton;* and also certain *private conversations* said to have been held by the Bishop with the other members of the Synod. But neither of these when examined, will be found to justify the use which is attempted to be made of them.

The nature and circumstances of the polite reply of President *Bogerman*, on which so much stress has been laid, were as follows. Bishop *Carleton*, when the article maintaining the parity of ministers came under consideration, rose in his place and opposed its adoption. He declared that diocesan Bishops were of divine appointment; that this order had been retained in the Church from the time of the Apostles; and that he could by no means give his sanction to the article proposed. To this address the Bishop himself expressly tells us, "*no answer was made by any**." And Dr. *Heylin* says, of the same speech, that "though it was "admitted, and perhaps recorded, it received no "other answer but *neglect*, if not *scorn* withal†."

Bishop *Hall*, however, (though by the way, he was not present when this event occurred, having

* See his *Protestation*, published after his return, and entitled *Appello ad Cæsarem.*

† *Hist. of Presbyter.* Book 12. p. 400.

retired from the Synod three months before, on account of indisposition,) gives a different account of the matter. Bishop *Carleton* himself, tells us that, in his speech, besides declaring his belief in the divine appointment of Prelacy, he launched out in praise of this form of ecclesiastical government, and spoke of its benign effects in *England*, in promoting union, order, and harmony in the Church of that kingdom. To all this, Bishop *Hall* says, the only answer made was by the President, *Bogerman*, who simply replied, "*Domine, nos non sumus adeo fœlices.*" *My Lord, we are not so happy**. Now as Bishop *Carleton*, who made the speech, declares that no answer was given to it by any one; as *Heylin* asserts that it was treated with *neglect*, if not with *scorn;* and as Bishop *Hall* was not himself present, at this time, in the Synod; the probability is, that he has given an erroneous statement. But supposing it to be perfectly correct, to what does it amount? It might have been intended as a *delicate sarcasm* on the Bishop, for his unseasonable introduction of this controversy. It might have been uttered as a *mere compliment* to a stranger, who was a Prelate, and with whom it was not desirable to have any dispute, when the object of the Synod was so entirely different. It might have been meant only to convey the idea, that the Church of *Holland* was not so happy as to be in that quiet, united, and orderly state, which had been represent-

* *Hall's Episcopacy by Divine Right*, &c. Part 1. § 4.

ed as existing in the Church of *England*. At any rate the answer is perfectly equivocal, and furnishes no warrant whatever for the construction of my opponents.

But these gentlemen lay no small stress on another circumstance. Bishop *Carleton*, in the same *Protestation* which was before quoted, informs us, that, " in his private discourse with some of the " most learned divines of the Synod, he told them " that the troubles of *Holland* proceeded from their " want of Bishops; and that the Churches of those " Provinces would never be quiet until they had " Bishops to govern the Clergy." To these remarks, he tells us, they answered, " that they high- " ly esteemed the good order and discipline of the " Church of *England*, and heartily wished the " same order was established in their country; but " that they could not hope for it, in the present " posture of affairs. They added, that they hoped " God would assist them by his grace, and that " they would contribute with all their might to the " establishment of that good order." " Such," the Bishop adds, " was their answer to me. This, " I think, justifies them sufficiently. It appears " that they do not love popular confusion, and a " government destitute of all authority." Mr. *How* must really be at a loss for testimony, when he can speak with so much exultation of this answer. It is nothing to the purpose. The Bishop, according to his own account, had been declaiming [redacted]he advantages of Episcopal government, and

on its influence as he supposed, in promoting the tranquillity, and happiness of the Church which he represented. To this, the Dutch divines, according to the same account, replied, that they had a very respectful opinion of the *good order* and *discipline* of the Church of *England*, and heartily wished that similar order and discipline were established in their own Church. But what did they mean by the "*good order*" and "*discipline*" of the Church of *England?* Did they mean her Prelacy? This is so far from being *certain* that it is not even *probable.* There is every reason to believe they only meant to say, that they highly esteemed the *regular, settled,* and *orderly* state which the English Church had attained; that they should be glad to see a similar regularity, and quietness established among themselves; but that, amidst so much confusion, they could hardly expect so happy a result. The truth is, the peace of the Church of *Holland* was, at this time, much disturbed by the controversy with the *Remonstrants*, which deeply agitated both Church and State. In these circumstances, nothing was more natural than that the members of the Synod should lament their divisions, and express a desire to establish among themselves the same *quietness* and *peace* which the Church of *England* enjoyed; and all this they might say without having the least wish or preference in favour of her Prelacy.

This, then, is the state of the case. The Reformed Church of *Holland* was Presbyterian from

the beginning. By a succession of national Synods the doctrine of ministerial parity was asserted, published, and maintained, in the most decisive manner, not merely as dictated by expediency, but also as founded in divine appointment. The Synod of *Dort* spoke the same language, and maintained the same doctrine. Nay, with a solemnity which had taken place at no preceding Synod, the members of that assembly, under the obligation of an *oath*, declared, that they considered themselves as bound to conform to *the Apostolic model* of Church government, and that *this model* was *Presbyterian.* And to all this evidence, Mr. *How* has nothing to oppose, but a few equivocal words of some individual members of the Synod, which probably had no reference to Prelacy at all. Who, now, let me ask, has proved himself most liable to the charges of "extreme imprudence," and of having brought forward "puerile" and "disingenuous" allegations? Truly charges of this kind come with a very ill grace from Mr. *How.*

But we have another method of ascertaining the real sentiments of some of those Divines who composed the Synod of *Dort*, besides their public conduct in that body. I mean by examining their *private writings*, in which we may take for granted they expressed their genuine convictions. From such of those writings as I have been able to procure, a few short extracts will be presented, and will be found conclusive.

Gomarus, Professor of Divinity at *Groningen*,

was one of the most eminent of the Dutch delegates to that famous Synod. On the subject of Episcopacy, he expresses himself in the following strong and decisive language. "The designation "of *Bishop*, as introduced *after* the Apostles' "time, is unknown to the Scriptures, in which it "signifies the same thing with the *Presbyter* and "*Pastor*. Where *Paul* recites the various kinds "of Gospel ministers, as in *Ephes.* 4. 11, he ac- "knowledges no such Bishops distinct from Pres- "byters, and superior to them. To which pur- "pose *Jerome*'s judgment is memorable, which is "extant in his commentary on the Epistle to *Titus* "1. 1, where, comparing the 5th and 7th verses, "he infers that the *Bishop* and *Presbyter* are *one* "*and the same.* Which point he doth, likewise, "(in the same manner that we have done,) de- "monstrate from *Philip.* 1. 1, and *Acts* xx. 28, "29. and other passages connected therewith, con- "cluding all with this weighty assertion, that *with* "*the ancients*, Bishops and Presbyters were *one* "*and the same;* until, *by degrees*, the care and in- "spection were put upon one; and that the *Bi-* "*shops* were set over the *Presbyters*, rather *by* "*custom* than by *divine appointment.* This cus- "tom, continues *Gomarus*, did, at last, bring upon "the Church, the *mischievous dominion of Bishops*, "contrary to the Apostle's command*."

Again, "There is no *Bishop* to be found set

* *Explicat. Epist. ad Galatas*, Cap. 11. p. 487.

" over *Presbyters* in any place of holy writ. The " distinguishing of Bishops from Presbyters, and " setting them over Presbyters, in an authoritative " Prelacy, took its rise *from no Divine institution*, " but from human tradition, *which had its founda-* " *tion in pride**."

Polyander, *Thysius*, and *Walæus*, Professors of Divinity in the Universities of *Leyden*, *Harderwick*, and *Middelburg*, were also conspicuous and active members of the Synod of *Dort*. These learned Divines were engaged in a joint work, under the title of *Synopsis Theologiæ*, which has been long highly esteemed in the Church of *Holland*. Of that work, the following strong and decisive passages are a specimen.

" The Apostle calls the same persons *Presby-* " *ters* and *Bishops* indifferently. Of this we have " examples, in *Acts* 20, 28, where he exhorts the " *Presbyters* of the Church of *Ephesus* to attend to " the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made " them *Bishops*;—also in 1 *Timothy* 3, 2. where " he describes a Bishop from his qualifications and " duties, which same qualifications and duties, the " Apostle *Peter* ascribes to his *fellow-Presbyters*; " so also in his Epistle to the *Philippians* 1. 1. by " Bishops he evidently understands those who pre- " sided over the Church of *Philippi*, in the admin- " istration of the word and discipline; and these " he distinguishes from *Deacons* who were entrust-

* *Explicat. in* 1 *Pet.* 5. p. 704.

" ed with the Church's treasure, &c. &c." After adducing several other instances of a similar kind, it is added, " The title of *Bishop* in Scripture does " not denote the authority of one minister over " other ministers of Christ, or any kind of prero- " gative enjoyed by one over others; but is mere- " ly used to designate that watch and care over the " Church which belongs to an individual."

Again, " The practice, therefore, of investing " one person from among the Presbyters with the " authority of President, and giving him, by way " of eminence, the title of *Bishop*, was not a divine, " but a *mere human appointment*, and was brought " in *after* the Apostles' time; as, after *Jerome*, " many of the *Papists* themselves confess, particu- " larly *Lombard*, *Gratian*, *Cusan*, and others."

Further, " The right of choosing Pastors be- " longs to the Church, and as well to the body of " the people as to the Elders; but the right of *or-* " *dination* belongs to the *Presbytery alone.* And " accordingly, in ancient times, the *election* of Pas- " tors was made by the suffrages of the whole bo- " dy of the people belonging to a Church; but the " *ordination* was performed by one of the Pastors, " in the name of the whole Presbytery, and in the " presence of the Church, by the imposition of " hands."

In another place they declare, " Although a few " of the first Pastors of our Churches were ordain- " ed by *Bishops*, by far the greater part have been " more recently ordained *by Presbyters.* The or-

LETTER IX.

Rise and Progress of Prelacy.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

DR. *Bowden* represents Presbyterians as believing that Prelacy was *suddenly* and *violently* established; that "a wonderful revolution took place, "calculated to influence the passions of thousands, "producing violent convulsions, and virulent ani- "mosities." And expresses great astonishment that *such* a revolution, introduced *at once*, should not have been more distinctly recorded by the early writers.

This is a total misrepresentation. Presbyterians believe and affirm, with *Jerome*, that Prelacy arose "*by little and little.*" They attribute its introduction to causes quite sufficient to account for the fact, without producing the convulsions and noise which fill the imagination of Dr. *Bowden*. These causes were, the facility, the indolence, and the inconsideration of some; the ambition of others; the precedency of standing moderators; the veneration paid to senior ministers, and such as were of superior talents and influence; the respect attached to those who resided in large cities, and other considerations of a similar kind. With such

causes as these incessantly at work, who can fail to consider as the most probable of all events, that which Dr. B. represents as altogether impossible?

But Dr. *Bowden* thinks it utterly incredible that the clergy in the second or third centuries should have been guilty of usurping power, or of struggling for pre-eminence. If we may believe him they were too pious, disinterested and humble, to admit the suspicion of selfishness or ambition having any place among them. "Surely," says he, "men of such distinguished virtue and piety as the "Bishops of that period are universally acknow-"ledged to have been, could not have entertained "a thought so inconsistent with a pure conscience, "with peace of mind, and with the hope of future "happiness. Could men who displayed all the "meekness and humility of Christians, have at-"tempted a plan of domination so completely at "variance with these virtues? Could men who en-"dured every thing for the sake of Christ, violate "his sacred institution? Could men, who, to save "themselves from the most excruciating torments, "would not offer incense at the idol altars, delibe-"rately associate for the purpose of acquiring a "trifling authority over their brethren? What! "*conscientious* in every thing relating to Christian "purity, to Christian manners, and yet *profligate* "as to the constitution of the Christian church! "Gross inconsistency! Palpable contradiction!" Again—"What was the motive that influenced a "few of the Presbyters to attempt an assumption

" of superiority over their brethren? Was it a de-
" sire of *temporal power?* That was entirely out
" of the question, without the aid of civil authori-
" ty. And every one knows that kind of authority
" was exerted for the destruction of the church.
" Was it the love of *wealth?* None resulted from
" the acquisition, or *could* result from it. The
" people were generally poor, and the Bishops, as
" well as the Presbyters and Deacons, were main-
" tained out of the offerings at the altar; and
" *scanty* was the fare that proceeded from that
" source. Was it the love of *ease* and *security?*
" That could not be; for Episcopal superiority
" greatly increased the labours of the Bishops, and
" exposed them to almost certain destruction. If,
" then, neither dominion, nor wealth, nor ease, nor
" security, could possibly be the motives for so
" daring an attempt, as to deprive the Presbyters
" of their most sacred rights, those ambitious spi-
" rits, as you deem them, must have acted without
" any motive, which is evidently inconsistent with
" the very nature and constitution of the human
" mind."

It is really putting one's patience to a very severe test to find an opponent so frequently alluding to his own superior " scholarship" and reading, and at the same time permitting himself to write in this manner. What! no clerical ambition? No strife about pre-eminence? No ecclesiastical usurpation in those early ages? It would have been just as reasonable, and just as true, if he

had said that the gospel was preached in those days by none but *angels.*——But let us attend to a few facts.

Passing by several cases in point which occurred during the lives, and under the immediate eye of the Apostles, when, as St. *Paul* himself assures us, *the mystery of iniquity had already begun to work*, let me ask, Was there no spirit of domination manifested in the fierce dispute between *Victor*, Bishop of *Rome*, and *Polycrates*, of *Ephesus*, which took place in the second century, as related by *Eusebius?* Was no love of pre-eminence displayed by *Cerinthus* and *Basilides*, whose burning desire was "to be "accounted great apostles?" Did *Montanus*, in the same century, exhibit no ambition in broaching his celebrated heresy? Was *Samosatenus*, in the third, wholly free from the same charge? Did *Demetrius* of *Alexandria*, discover nothing of an aspiring temper, when he sickened with envy at the fame and the success of *Origen?* Are there no accounts of *Novatus* having sought, ambitiously and fraudently, to obtain the Bishopric of *Rome?* Did not his contemporary, *Felicissimus*, make a vigorous attempt to supplant *Cyprian*, as Bishop of *Carthage?* Was not *Cyprian* brought in to be Bishop in that city, by the influence of the people, in opposition to the majority of the Presbyters, some of whom were anxious to obtain the place for themselves? And did there not hence arise frequent collisions between him and them, and at length an open rupture? I ask, are any of these

things related in the early history of the Church? And can any man, with such records before him, lay his hand on his heart, and assert that there were no symptoms of a spirit of ambition and domination in those times?

But I will not content myself with this general reference to the early conflicts of selfishness and ambition. The following specific quotations will be more than sufficient, if I do not mistake, to cover Dr. *Bowden* with confusion.

Hermas, one of the earliest Fathers whose writings are extant, says, in his *Pastor*, "As for those "who had their rods green, but yet cleft; they "are such as were always faithful and good; but "they had some *envy* and *strife* among themselves, "concerning *dignity* and *pre-eminence*. Now all "such are vain and without understanding, as con- "tend with one another about these things. Ne- "vertheless, seeing they are *otherwise* good, if, "when they shall hear these commands, they "shall amend themselves, and shall, at my persua- "sion, suddenly repent; they shall, at last, dwell "in the tower, as they who have truly and worthily "repented. But if any one shall again return to "his dissentions, he shall be shut out of the "tower, and lose his life. For the life of those "who keep the commandments of the Lord, con- "sists in doing what they are commanded; not "in *principality*, or in any other *dignity**."

* *Simil.* 8. § 7.

Hegisippus, who lived in the *second* century, and who was the first Father who undertook to compose a regular ecclesiastical history, writes thus. "When *James*, the just, had been martyred for "the same doctrine which our Lord preached, "*Simon*, the son of *Cleophas*, was constituted Bi. "shop with universal preference, because he was "the Lord's near kinsman. Wherefore they cal- "led that Church a pure virgin, because it was "not defiled with corrupt doctrine. But *Thebuli*, "*because he was not made Bishop*, endeavoured to "corrupt the Church; being one of the seven "heretics among the people, whereof was *Simon*, "of whom the *Simonians**."

Dr. *Bowden* represents the age of *Cyprian* as among the very purest periods of the christian Church, and quotes that Father with a frequency and a confidence which evince the highest respect for his authority. The following passages will show how far the illustrious Pastor of *Carthage* considered the Bishops of his day as beyond the reach of selfishness and ambition.

"A long continuance of peace and security† "had relaxed the rigour of that holy discipline "which was delivered to us from above. All were "set upon an immeasurable increase of gain; and, "forgetting how the first converts to our religion

* See *fragments* of this writer preserved in *Eusebius*, Lib. IV. Cap. 22.

† They had been free from persecution only about thirty-eight years.

" had behaved under the personal direction and " care of the Lord's Apostles, or how all ought " in after times to conduct themselves; the *love* " *of money* was their darling passion, and the mas- " ter spring of all their actions. The religion of " the clergy slackened and decayed; the faith of " priests and deacons grew languid and inactive; " works of charity were discontinued; and an " universal licence and corruption prevailed. Di- " vers *Bishops*, who should have taught, both by " their example and persuasion, neglecting their " high trust, and their commission from above, " entered upon the management of secular affairs; " and leaving their chair, and their charge with it, " wandered about, from place to place in different " provinces, upon *mercantile* business, and in quest " of *disreputable gain*. Thus the poor of the " Church were miserably neglected, while the *Bi-* " *shops*, who should have taken care of them, " were intent upon nothing but their own *private* " *profit*, which they were forward to advance at " *any rate*, and by any, even the *foulest methods**."

Speaking of *Cornelius*, who had been made *Bishop*, *Cyprian*, says, " In the next place, he neither " *desired*, nor *canvassed* for the dignity conferred " upon him; much less did he *invade it*, as some " others would, who were actuated by a great and " lofty conceit of their own qualifications; but " peaceably and modestly, like such as are called " of God to this office.—Instead of *using violence*,

* *De Lapsis*. § 4.

" as a certain person in this case *hath done*, to be " made a Bishop, he *suffered* violence, and was " raised to his dignity by force and compulsion*."

The same Father, in the same Epistle, has the following passage. " Unless you can think him a " Bishop, who, when another was ordained by six- " teen of his brethren Bishops, would obtrude upon " the Church a spurious and foreign Bishop, or- " dained by a parcel of renegadoes and deser- " ters; and that by *canvassing* and *intriguing* for " it†."

Cyprian speaks also of a certain *Deacon* who had been deposed from his " sacred Diaconate, on ac- " count of his *fraudulent* and *sacrilegious* misap- " plication of the Church's money to his own pri- " vate use; and by his denial of the widows' and " orphans' pledges deposited with him‡."

Origen, the contemporary of *Cyprian*, more than once lashes the clergy of his day for their vices. The following passage is surely strong enough, were there no other, to take away all doubt. " If " Christ justly wept over *Jerusalem*, he may *now*, " on much better grounds, *weep over the Church*, " which was built to the end that it might be an " house of prayer; and yet, through the *filthy* " *usury* of some, (and I wish these were not even " the *Pastors* of the people,) is made a *den of* " *thieves*. But I think that that which is written " concerning the sellers of doves, doth agree to " those who commit the Churches to *greedy, ty-*

* *Epist. 55.* † *Ibid.* ‡ *Epist. 52.*

" *rannical*, *unlearned*, and *irreligious Bishops*, " *Presbyters*, and *Deacons**." The same Father, elsewhere declares, " *We* are such as that we " sometimes in *pride* go beyond even the wicked- " est of the princes of the gentiles; and are just at " the point of procuring for ourselves *splendid* " *guards*, as if we were kings, making it our study " moreover to be a terror to others, and giving " them, especially if they be poor, very uneasy ac- " cess. We are to them, when they come and " seek any thing from us, more *cruel* than are even " *tyrants*, or the cruelest princes to their suppli- " cants. And you may see, even in the greater " part of lawfully constituted Churches, especially " those of greater cities, how the *Pastors* of God's " people, suffer none, though they were even the " chiefest of Christ's disciples, to be equal with " themselves†."

Eusebius, who lived in the next century, writes in the same strain concerning the age of *Cyprian*. " When, through too much liberty, we fell into " sloth and negligence; when every one began to " *envy* and *backbite* another; when we waged, " as it were, an intestine war amongst ourselves, " with words as with swords; *Pastors* rushed " against *Pastors*, and people against people, and " strife and tumult, deceit and guile advanced to " the highest pitch of wickedness——Our Pastors, " despising the rule of religion, *strove mutual-* " *ly with one another*, studying nothing more

* *In Matt.* p. 441. † *Ibid.* p. 420.

" than how to *outdo each other* in strife, emula-
" tions, hatred, and mutual enmity; *proudly*
" *usurping principalities*, as so many places of
" *tyrannical domination.* Then the Lord covered
" the daughter of *Zion* with a cloud in his an-
" ger*."

Nay, Archbishop *Whitgift*, with all his Episcopal partialities, was constrained to acknowledge the ambitious and aspiring temper which disgraced many Bishops even as early as the time of *Cyprian.* " There was great contention," says he, " among the Bishops in the council of *Nice*, inso-
" much that even in the presence of the Emperor,
" they ceased not to libel one against another.
" What bitterness and cursing was there between
" *Epiphanius* and *Chrysostom!* What jarring be-
" tween *Jerome* and *Augustine!* Bishops shall not
" now need to live by *pilling* and *polling*, as it
" seems they did in *Cyprian*'s time; for he com-
" plaineth thereof in his sermon *De Lapsis*†."

With *Whitgift* agrees his cotemporary *Rigaltius*, who was so much distinguished for his learned Annotations on the works of *Cyprian.* Speaking of *Cyprian*'s age, and of the Deacon's office, he says, " By little and little, and from small begin-
" nings, a *kingdom*, and a *love of dominion* entered
" into the Church.—In the Apostles' time there
" were only *Deacons; Cyprian*'s age admitted *sub-*

* *Hist. Eccles. Lib.* VIII. Cap. 1.

† *Defence* of his *Answer* against *Cartwright*, p. 472. &c.

" *deacons;* the following age *Arch-deacons*, and " then *Arch-bishops* and *Patriarchs.*"

These extracts are produced, not to blacken the ministerial character; but to establish the *fact*, which Dr. *Bowden* denies, that clerical ambition, and clerical encroachments were familiarly known, even during that period which he pronounces the purest that was ever enjoyed by the christian Church. I certainly have no interest, and can take no pleasure in depicting the foibles, the strife, and the vices, of the clergy in any age. But when assertions are made respecting them as directly contradictory to all history, as they are contrary to the course of depraved human nature; and especially when these assertions are triumphantly employed as arguments to establish other assertions equally unfounded, it is time to vindicate the truth. To do this, in the present case, is an easy task. The man who, after perusing the foregoing extracts, can dare to say, that the clergy of the first three centuries, were all too pious and disinterested to admit the suspicion, that they aspired to titles and honors, and intrigued for the attainment of Episcopal chairs, must have a hardihood of incredulity, or an obliquity of perception truly extraordinary. We have seen that *Hermas* plainly refers to certain ecclesiastics of his time, who had " envy and " strife among themselves concerning dignity and " pre-eminence." *Hegesippus* goes further, and points out the case of a particular individual, who ambitiously aspired to the office of Bishop, and

was exceedingly disappointed and mortified at not obtaining it. *Cyprian* expressly declares not only that a spirit of intrigue, of worldly gain, and of ecclesiastical domination, *existed* among the clergy of his day, but that such a spirit was awfully *prevalent* among them. *Eusebius* gives us similar information in still stronger terms. Archbishop *Whitgift* makes the same acknowledgment, more particularly with respect to the *Bishops* of that period. And even Dr. *Bowden* himself, forgetting his own assertions, unwarily acknowledges, in several other parts of his work, that a number of persons, as early as the days of *Cyprian*, and before his time, who aspired to the office of Bishop, and who used every effort and artifice to attain it, on being disappointed, distinguished themselves as *heretics* or *schismatics*, and became the pests of the Church. Was there no spirit of ambition and domination among such men? Why did they aspire to the office of Bishop? Was there nothing in that office to attract their regard, or to excite their cupidity? Or did they act without motive? Surely this gentleman needs to have some one at hand to refresh his memory, and to prevent him from warring against his own cause. But a man must be wary and ingenious indeed, who can be consistent when truth is against him.

Still, however, the question recurs; What, in those days of persecution and peril, before christianity was established; when the powers of the world were leagued against it; and when every

christian pastor especially held a station of much self-denial and danger, what could induce any selfish or ambitious man to desire the pastoral office, and to intrigue for the extension of the powers and honours of that office? When my opponents can tell me what induced *Judas Iscariot* to follow Christ, at the risk of his life; when they can tell me what impelled *Diotrephes* to *desire the pre-eminence* in the Church; or what were the objects of *Demas*, *Hymenæus*, and *Alexander*, in their restless and ambitious conduct, while *Calvary* was yet smoking with the blood of their crucified Lord, and while their own lives were every moment exposed to the rage of persecution;—when my opponents can tell me what actuated these men, I shall be equally ready to assign a reason for the early rise and progress of Prelacy.

But there is no need of retreating into the obscurity of conjecture, when causes enough to satisfy every mind may easily be assigned. If Dr. *Bowden* does not know that there are multitudes of men, in all ages, in the Church, and out of it, who are ready to court distinction, merely for distinction's sake, and at the evident hazard of their lives, he is less acquainted both with human nature and with history than I have been accustomed to suppose him. But this is not all. It is a notorious fact, notwithstanding all the round assertions of Dr. *Bowden* to the contrary, that the office of Bishop, even in very early times, had much to attract the *cupidity* as well as the *ambition* of selfish and

aspiring men. The *revenues* of the primitive Church were large and alluring. It is granted that, during the first three centuries, the Church held little or no *real* property; as the Roman laws did not allow any person to give or bequeath real estates to ecclesiastical bodies, without the consent of the Senate or the Emperor. The *contributions*, however, which were made to the Church, for the support of the Clergy, the poor, &c. were immense. During the Apostolic age, the proceeds of the sale of real estates were devoted to ecclesiastical and charitable purposes, and laid at the Apostles' feet. We find the Gentile Churches contributing liberally to the relief of the Churches of *Judea*, in *Acts* xi. 29. *Rom.* xv. 26. 1 *Corinth.* xvi. 1. and 2 *Corinth.* viii. The same liberality manifested itself in subsequent times*. So ample were the funds of the Church of *Rome*, about the middle of the second century, that they were adequate not only to the support of her own clergy and poor members; but also to the relief of other Churches, and of a great number of christian captives in the

* One cause of the liberality of the primitive christians in their contributions to the church, was the notion which generally prevailed, that the *end of the world* was at hand. This notion was adopted by some of the early Fathers, and propagated among the people with great diligence. *Cyprian* taught, in his day, with great confidence, that the dissolution of the world was but a few years distant. *Epist. ad Thibart.* The tendency of this opinion to diminish the self-denial of parting with temporal wealth is obvious. See Father *Paul's Hist. of Benefices and Revenues.* Chap. II.

several provinces, and of such as were condemned to the mines*. Such was the wealth of the same Church, in the third century, that it was considered as an object not unworthy of Imperial rapacity. By order of the Emperor *Decius*, the Roman Deacon *Laurentius* was seized, under the expectation of finding in his possession the treasures of the Church, and of transferring them to the coffers of the Emperor: But the vigilant Deacon, fearing the avarice of the tyrant, had distributed them, as usual, when a persecution was expected. *Prudentius* introduces an officer of the Emperor, thus addressing the Deacon, *Quod Cæsaris scis, Cæsari da, nempe justum postulo; ni fallor, haud ullam tuus signat Deus pecuniam.* i. e. *Give to Cæsar what you know to be his, I ask what is just; for if I mistake not, your God coins no money*†.

Now the revenues of the Churches, whether great or small, were at the disposal of the Bishops. The Deacons executed their orders. Of course they had every opportunity of enriching themselves at the expense of the Church. And that they embraced this opportunity, is attested by *Cyprian*, who laments the fact, and is of opinion that the persecution which took place in the reign of *Decius*, was intended by God to punish a guilty people, and to purge this corruption from his Church‡.

* Father *Paul's Hist. of Ecclesiastical Benefices and Revenues*, Chap. III.

† *Prudent.* in Lib. *de Coronis.* Father *Paul's History of Ecclesiastical Benefices and Revenues*, Chap. III.

‡ See his discourse, *De Lapsis* before quoted.

And yet, in the face of all this testimony, Dr. *Bowden* has permitted himself to assert, that there was *no temptation*, either before or during the age of *Cyprian*, to induce any man to desire the office of a Bishop; and especially that it was impossible for any to be moved by the love of *wealth* to seek that office, because no acquisitions of that kind "resulted from it, or *could* result from it!" It is really amazing that gentlemen can so entirely close their eyes against the light of all authentic history. If Dr. *Bowden* were an ardent and incautious young man who had but lately commenced the examination of this subject, he might be pardoned on the score of ignorance; but to a gentleman of his long experience and standing in the controversy, it is difficult to suppose this apology applicable.

One of the arguments which I adduced in support of the gradual introduction of Prelacy, was the fact, that *Metropolitans*, or *Archbishops*, though acknowledged on all hands not to have been instituted by the Apostles, were yet early brought in by human ambition; while, at the same time, the early records are so scanty, that we are unable to pronounce *when* they were first introduced.

To this Dr. *Bowden* gives two answers. The *first* is, that we *can* decide, with *certainty*, when the authority of Metropolitans took its rise: And the *second*, that the cases are by no means *parallel*, and that the argument, even if the facts were admitted, is of no force.

To establish the first point Dr. B. quotes a short passage from Dr. *Cave*, a divine of the eighteenth century, who gives it as his *opinion*, that Metropolitans were introduced "not long after the "apostolic age, when sects and schisms broke in "apace, and when controversies were multiplied "between particular Bishops." But was *Cave* a *primitive Father?* What authority had he to decide such a question? And what did he mean by the expression "not long after the apostolic age?" Did he mean two, three, or four centuries? All is vague and conjectural. Besides, from this passage it leaks out, after all Dr. *Bowden*'s care to conceal it, or rather his explicit denial of the fact, that there were *sects*, and *schisms*, and *jarrings* among the Bishops, "not long after the apostolic age." In support of the same assertion, Dr. *Bowden* quotes a longer passage from *Bingham*, another divine of the eighteenth century, who, after expressing his agreement with *Cave*, adds, "*Per-* "*haps* the office of *Metropolitan* took its rise from "that common respect and deference, which was "usually paid by the rest of the Bishops to the "Bishops of the *civil* metropolis in every pro-"vince." He then produces, what Dr. B. calls "sufficient evidence," that this office existed in the *second* century; that there are traces of its commencement as early as the time of *Irenæus;* that it advanced *gradually;* and that it was not until about the time of the Council of *Nice* that the term *Metropolitan* came into frequent use. Now,

though Dr. *Bowden* contents himself with very slender proof; and though his confident conclusion, that "there is not the *least* difficulty in determining when *Primates* or *Metropolitans* took their rise in the christian Church," is, in the connection in which it stands, truly ludicrous; yet, allowing it to be correct, does not every discerning reader perceive that he is unwittingly confirming my argument? He concedes, that *Metropolitans* were *not* instituted by the Apostles; and he also concedes, that they were brought in, by *human contrivance*, soon after the Apostolic age; but that they were not spoken of familiarly, under this title, until near the middle of the *fourth* century. But *how* they were introduced; by what *means;* whether with or without *opposition*, neither he nor the divines whom he quotes as his authorities, have any thing more than *conjecture* to offer. And is not this exactly the ground on which I assert the fact to stand? With whom is this gentleman contending?

But Dr. *Bowden* goes further, and contends, in the *second* place, that, "even if it were impossible to determine the *time* when Metropolitans first appeared in the church, there would be no parallel between this difficulty, and the one relating to Episcopacy." But why no parallel? The office of *Metropolitan* was a grade of ecclesiastical pre-eminence, as well as that of ordinary *Bishop*. Now, if it be granted, that the former office *was* introduced by human contrivance; that it was *gradual-*

ly brought in; that it was introduced without any known *opposition* and *noise;* why might not the same facts have occurred with respect to Prelacy? Dr. *Bowden*, indeed, asserts, that the office of *Metropolitan* was, in the beginning, a mere *presidency*, introduced for the sake of convenience and order; that, in this stage of its rise, there was no material encroachment on the rights of others; and, of course, nothing that had a tendency to excite alarm, resentment, or opposition. And is not this exactly what we say concerning the rise of Prelacy? In all these respects, indeed, Dr. B. would persuade us, that the rise of *Metropolitanism* was wholly unlike that of *Prelacy*. But for this we have only his word. He does not produce even a shadow of proof. On the contrary we maintain, that Prelacy arose, with very little variation, in the *same* manner in which he represents *metropolitanism* as having been brought in. And the acknowledged fact, that the latter was early introduced, without exciting, so far as we know, any extensive opposition or noise, we consider as conclusive evidence that the former *might* have arisen in the same manner. We suppose, that the first steps, in both cases, were small, and studiously ordered so as to excite as little attention as possible; that the introduction of new *names* was, for a considerable time, carefully avoided; and that the object was, in fact, fully gained, before the mask was thrown off, and the purpose avowed.

Dr. B. insists that the rise of Metropolitans was

not *as likely* to excite alarm and opposition as that of Bishops. But why not? Were not Prelates as likely to perceive and take the alarm, when some of their own number assumed a superiority over the rest, as Presbyters were, when some of *their* number gradually gained a pre-eminence among their brethren? Were Prelates less discerning, less awake to encroachments, or less conscientious in guarding against them, than Presbyters? But, says Dr. *Bowden*, in the case of Metropolitans, there was no usurpation of any particular *rite* or *power;* whereas, in the rise of Prelacy, according to the ideas of Presbyterians, there was a direct usurpation of the *ordaining* and *confirming* power, which before belonged to all Presbyters in common. The latter, therefore, in his opinion, was much less likely to gain undisputed admittance than the former. But in this reasoning Dr. *Bowden* betrays a total misunderstanding of what Presbyterians believe. They do not suppose, or admit, that the usurpation of the *ordaining* power was the *first* step, or even *among the first* steps in the rise of Prelacy. They suppose that an *occasional* and then a *stated presidency* were the first steps; and that the power of ordaining was not taken entirely out of the hands of Presbyters, until several centuries after the claims of Prelacy commenced.

The cases, then, after all that Dr. *Bowden* has said to the contrary, are strictly parallel. The *time* and *manner* of the rise of Metropolitans, are left as completely undefined in early history, as are

the *time* and *manner* of the rise of Prelates. In both cases, by a careful comparison of testimony, we can come, with certainty, *near* the truth, but nothing more. In both cases, the rise was evidently *gradual.* In both cases, the first steps were *small*, and dictated, as those concerned were made to believe, by convenience, expediency, and even necessity, rather than by ambition. And, in both cases, it was not until several hundred years, when long habit and prescription had reconciled every mind to the usurpation, that its claims were openly and unreservedly urged.

It is of some importance to advert to two or three other facts. Although *Metropolitans*, when first introduced, appear to have been, as Dr. B. supposes, nothing more than mere *Presidents* or *Moderators;* yet it is manifest that they very soon became something more. I know not when those writings, called the *Apostolical Canons*, were composed. Dr. B. thinks in the second and third centuries. But one thing I know, that, whenever they were composed, the 34th Canon decrees, "that "the Bishops of every nation ought to know him "who is *first* among them, and *acknowledge him* "*for their head*, and do *nothing* of moment without "out *his consent*, and *he* nothing without *their's*." Here is a power greatly exceeding that of a mere *presiding* equal. How was this power acquired? How could it be acquired so *soon*, and when, if we may believe Dr. B, no such thing as clerical *am-*

bition existed? Above all, how could it be acquired so *quietly*, and with so *little opposition*, as that the several steps of its progress should not be found recorded by the early Fathers? Again; in the age of *Cyprian*, we find *Sub-deacons* and *Readers* spoken of as distinct *orders* of *Clergy*, who had each a distinct *ordination**. How could these orders be introduced, in an age, which, according to Dr. B. was so perfectly pure, and so strict in its adherence to apostolic precedent? How could *Readers* and *Sub-deacons* be ranked among the *Clergy?* This single fact is enough to show, that before the age of *Cyprian*, undisguised innovation had found its way into the Church; and also that, when *Deacons* are spoken of, by some of the Fathers, as *ministers* of the word, and as of the order of *Clergy*, it affords not the smallest presumption that such was the apostolic model.

As another proof, that a spirit of ambition and of ecclesiastical encroachment, early began to appear in the Church, I mentioned the rise and progress of the *Papacy*. I observed, that the antichristian claims of the Bishop of *Rome* began as early as the time of *Irenæus*, and might be considered as gradually rising from that period, until he was at length established and acknowledged as *universal Bishop*. And I observed, moreover, that, "although the most impartial and learned

* *Cyprian.* Epist. 8. and 39.

" divines may and do differ among themselves in " fixing the several dates of the rise, progress, and " establishment of this great spiritual usurper; yet " the *fact*, that he did thus rise and advance, " and erect a tyrannical throne in the Church, " contrary to all that might have been expect- " ed both from the piety and the selfishness of " the early Christians, is doubted by none."

In answer to this argument Dr. *Bowden* ventures to assert, that " there is not, before the *seventh cen-* " *tury*, the *least trace* of any system of policy in " the *Holy See*, (that of *Rome*,) to establish " its claim of superiority over other Bishops." Of an assertion of this kind, I really feel at a loss what to think, or what to say. That it is an assertion which directly contradicts all history, I need not stay to demonstrate. Every well-informed man knows it to be so. The only question which can arise is, how Dr. *Bowden* could have ventured to advance it?

By the *Papacy*, strictly speaking, is meant that claim which the Bishop of *Rome* has long made of being, as such, the successor of *Peter*, superior to all other Bishops, and the visible Head of the Church. No man in his senses ever supposed that this system of ecclesiastical usurpation was either claimed or acknowledged *all at once*. It had a rise, a progress, and a completion. That it did not reach its summit until the seventh century, I have no hesitation in granting. Nor have I ever penned a sentence inconsistent with this acknowledg-

ment. But that it *began* to rise several centuries before, every Protestant historian that I have ever met with, has unequivocally stated: And that it made slow, but steady progress, from the time of *Victor* to that of *Boniface*, insomuch, that at the end of every successive century, it was perceived to have sensibly gained ground, I took for granted, before I saw Dr. *Bowden*'s book, that every man who regarded his reputation, either for discernment or candour, would readily allow. Nay, Dr. *Bowden* himself, if I understand him, acknowledges that the power of the Popes was *gradually* assumed; for "the *several epochs* of their increasing power," he tells us, have been so distinctly marked, that we can be at no loss to ascertain them. And yet he says, "there was not, before the *seventh* "century, the *least trace* of any system of policy "in the *Holy See* to establish its claim of superiori-"ty over other Bishops!" Unless this gentleman can retreat behind some unusual signification of terms, I know not how he can escape very serious charges from every discerning reader.

I consider the following facts, then, as perfectly established—viz. that as early as the second and third centuries there was quite enough clerical *ambition* in the Church to account for the rise of prelacy; that the acknowledged rise of *Metropolitans*, during that period, is a proof, at once, that there was a disposition among many of the clergy to aspire after pre-eminence, and that it was by no

means an impossible thing so far to hoodwink and cajole others, as to obtain it; and that the beginning, progress, and establishment of the *Papal* power, is quite as difficult to be accounted for on Episcopal principles, as the introduction of Prelacy by human authority. But, if it be fact, that there were materials enough in the clergy of that age, and circumstances enough in the times, to generate irregular ambition; and if other *facts* demonstrate that they *did* cherish this ambition; that they *did* thus aspire and encroach; then we are surely warranted in inferring that the human invention and introduction of prelacy, was not only a *possible*, but a very *probable* event.

Among the numerous facts which prove that diocesan Episcopacy is an *innovation* on the apostolic model, and that it was *gradually* introduced, I mentioned in my former letters, that ministerial parity continued longest in those parts of the Church which were at the greatest distance from the capital cities. As an instance, to illustrate this remark, I observed, that "the Churches in *Scot-*
"*land* remained *Presbyterian* in their government,
"from the introduction of Christianity into that
"country, in the *second* century, until the *fifth*
"century, when *Palladius* succeeded in introduc-
"ing diocesan Bishops." This fact Dr. *Bowden* entirely denies. Let us see on what evidence it rests. That the gospel was introduced into *North Britain* before the *fifth* century, is evident from

Tertullian, who says, "The places of *Britain* to "which the Romans could not have access, are "notwithstanding subject to Christ*." *Fordon*, a Scotch historian, who wrote in the fourteenth century, and who was no Presbyterian, on the one hand declares, (as Dr. B. acknowledges,) that the *Scots* received the christian faith in the year of our Lord 203; and on the other asserts, (what Dr. B. has *not* acknowledged,) that "Before the coming "of *Palladius*, the *Scots*, following the custom of "the primitive Church, had teachers of the faith, "and dispensers of the sacraments, who were only "Presbyters or Monks†." This statement is confirmed by *Major*, another Scottish historian, who wrote about the beginning of the sixteenth century, and who lived and died a friend of prelacy. He declares, "The *Scots* were instructed in the faith, by Priests and Monks, without Bishops‡." *Boethius*, a third historian of *Scotland*, who was contemporary with *Major*, and also a prelatist, still more explicitly says, "*Palladius* was the FIRST "who exercised any hierarchal power among the "*Scots*, being ordained their Bishop by the Pope, "whereas, before, their Priests were, by the suffrages of the people, chosen out of the Monks and "Culdees§." *Prosper Aquitanæus*, in his *Chronicle*, has these words—"*Palladius* is ordained by "Pope *Cœlestine*, for the *Scots*, who had already "believed in Christ, and is sent to them to be their

* *Contra Jud.* Cap. VII. † *Hist.* Lib. iii. Cap. 8.
‡ *De Gestis Scotor.* Lib. ii. Cap. 2. § *Scot. Hist.* Lib. vi.

"*first* Bishop." *Palladius*, according to this writer, did not *introduce* the gospel among the *Scots*; they believed in Christ *before* he was sent to them; but he was the *first Bishop*, or *Prelate*, that they ever had. The same fact is attested by Cardinal *Baronius*, who says, "All men agree that this na-"tion, (the *Scots*,) had *Palladius* their FIRST Bi-"shop from Pope *Cælestine**."

Dr. *Bowden* has no other method of evading the force of this evidence, but by insinuating, (as others, who were perplexed by the argument, had done before him,) that by the *Scots* these writers meant the *Irish!* This evasion is too ridiculous to be seriously refuted. It contradicts the most authentic history†. And if Dr. B. will take the trouble to consult his own Episcopal historians, *Skinner* and *Goodall*‡, he will be satisfied, that in adopting this notion, he has been led astray by blind guides. But, suppose that it were even so; what advantage to Dr. *Bowden*'s cause would result from this discovery? Would it not be a fact equally against him, if it were found that the Churches of *Ireland*, instead of *Scotland*, were, under the government of Presbyters, without Prelates, for more than 200 years after their being first planted?

* *Annal.* 429.

† Cardinal *Baronius* expressly distinguishes between the visits of *Palladius* to *Scotland*, and *Ireland*. His visit to the former country, he mentions in the manner cited above: that to the latter, he speaks of in a subsequent paragraph.

‡ *Skinner's Ecclesiastical History of Scotland*, LETTER I.—*Goodall's Introduction to the History and Antiquities of Scotland*. Chapters 2. 7. and 16.

Dr. *Bowden*, in attempting to show the improbability that Prelacy was introduced *after* the Apostolic age, as a measure of *human expediency*, still insists that, if it were introduced at all, it must have been *very suddenly*. To corroborate this assertion, he represents some of the ablest Presbyterian Divines who have written on the subject, as acknowledging that Prelacy had been brought in as early as the middle of the *second century*. He assures us, more than once, that, among others, the learned *Blondel* concedes the existence of Prelacy as early as the year of our Lord 140, which was within fifty years of the death of the last Apostle. This is a misrepresentation; and a misrepresentation so extraordinary, that I know not how to account for it but by supposing that Dr. *Bowden* never saw *Blondel*'s far-famed work. Whatever Dr. B. may say to the contrary, *Blondel* does *not* make such a concession as he imputes to him. The passage to which Dr. B. no doubt, refers, is found in the *Preface* to the *Apology;* and its import is, that, about the year 140, according to the best light the author had been able to attain, one of the steps toward the establishment of Prelacy was taken, which consisted in choosing *standing moderators*. If by *Bishops* be understood, not what the Scriptures and the Presbyterian Church mean by that title, but what Dr. *Bowden* and his friends mean, an order of clergy, who were alone invested with the power of ordination; then it is perfectly mani-

fest to all who ever perused *Blondel*'s work, that its grand scope is to show the direct contrary of that which Dr. *Bowden* ascribes to him; and that for this purpose, he quotes *Cyprian*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, and still later Fathers, who lived long after the year 140, to show that, *in their day*, Episcopacy, in the prelatical sense of that word, was *not* introduced. In short, *Blondel*'s whole book is written to prove that Prelacy was *not* an apostolic institution; that it was brought into the Church *gradually;* and that it was *several hundred years* in gaining an establishment. Considering the frequency and positiveness with which Dr. *Bowden* undertakes to state the testimony of *Blondel*, he certainly ought to have understood it better.

Dr. B. also asserts that *Salmasius*, an acute and learned advocate of ministerial parity, makes a concession of the same kind with that which he ascribes to *Blondel*. I have never seen the *Walo Messalinus* of that celebrated Presbyterian; and cannot undertake with confidence to say that Dr. B. has misrepresented him also; but I strongly suspect this to be the case, and shall certainly require, after all that I have seen, better evidence of the contrary than his assertion. The learned *Chamier* and *Du Moulin* are also quoted by Dr. B. as making still more pointed and important concessions. But as he has not chosen to inform us *where* these concessions are to be found, I consider myself as liberated from all further obligation to no-

tice them*. I am verily persuaded, however, that he has been deceived by the representation of others, and that he entirely mistakes the opinions of those writers.

After carefully reviewing all that Dr. *Bowden* has said on the rise and progress of Prelacy, I only think it necessary to offer and illustrate a single additional remark. It is this. That the indiscriminate application of the titles *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, during the *first* and *second*, and occasionally, as Dr. B. himself acknowledges, in the *third* century, furnishes, in my view, a most powerful argument in support of ministerial parity, and that in a point of light which I have not hitherto stated. The use of terms is to express distinct ideas. The use of *official titles* is to express in single terms official rank and powers. Now it is conceded by Dr. *Bowden*, and by Episcopalians generally, that the titles *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were applied indiscriminately, in the days of the Apostles, to designate the same order of clergy; and that both are most frequently applied, in the New Testament, to what they call the *second order*, or the *Pastors of single Churches*. They contend that the *Apostles themselves* were, strictly speaking, the Prelates of the apostolic Church; and that the title of *Bishop* was, in fact, then applied precisely as the

* It is really not a little extraordinary that Dr. *Bowden*, after all his promises to the contrary, should so frequently be guilty of this conduct.

Presbyterians now apply it, to every minister of the gospel who had a pastoral charge. This they all explicitly grant. But they insist that, in process of time, as the Apostles died, the title of *Apostle* was laid aside, and that of *Bishop* began to take its place, and to be restricted to an order of clergy superior to Pastors, and succeeding to the apostolic pre-eminence. But does not all this carry improbability on the very face of it? Is it likely that the inspired Apostles, or men immediately taught by them, when the Churches, for more than half a century, had been accustomed to employ a certain title to designate a particular class of ecclesiastical officers, would have adopted that very title to designate a totally different class, and that when all the riches of language were open to their selection? Can it be supposed, above all, that this would have been done in a case in which, if we believe our Episcopal brethren, the distinction of orders has always been essential to the very being of the Church? It cannot be supposed. Had their object been to produce confusion of ideas, and perpetual inconvenience in the expression of them, they could scarcely have adopted a more direct method to attain their end.

But, on the other hand, supposing Prelacy *not* to have been an apostolic institution, but to have been brought in by human ambition, and that in a *gradual* and almost *insensible* manner, as we contend; then nothing is more natural than this indiscriminate use of official titles in early times. The most

effectual way to disguise a *new office*, and to prevent the mass of the people from suspecting it of either encroachment or innovation, was to give it an *old name*. When, therefore, one of the Pastors, in a city or district, began to assume pre-eminent honours and powers over his colleagues, instead of taking some new and high-sounding title, it was an obvious dictate of policy to content himself with a title which was common to his brethren. This policy was accordingly adopted. The plain title of *Bishop*, which was before given to *all* Pastors, and to which the people had been long accustomed, was still the only one which the aspiring individual ventured to employ. But it obviously would not have served the purpose either of convenience or ambition to *continue* this community of title when a new order had arisen in the Church. Some alteration of ecclesiastical language was necessary for the sake of being understood; and it was equally necessary that the alteration should be such as not to alarm or offend. The consequence was, that the ordinary Pastors gradually dropped the title of *Bishop*, leaving it to be the appropriate title of those who had succeeded in raising themselves above the rest, and consenting to be called *Presbyters* or *Elders* only.

When, therefore, our Episcopal brethren grant, as they all do, that the titles of *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, in the days of the Apostles, were interchangeably applied to the same class of officers, and those ordinary Pastors of the Church; when they grant,

as they also universally do, that the *former* of these titles was gradually disused by ordinary Pastors and appropriated to Prelates; and when they further concede, as they do with one voice, that the process of dropping this title on the part of the former, and appropriating it on the part of the latter, took up a period of *more than a hundred years* after the death of the Apostles;—I think no candid man can hesitate to conclude, that the necessity of this change in ecclesiastical titles, arose from *the introduction of an order of officers before unknown in the Church.*

What confirms this reasoning is, that we certainly know facts of a similar kind to have taken place very early. Dr. *Bowden* himself asserts that although *Metropolitans* existed, in fact, in the second century, yet that the use of this distinctive title, was but little known before the council of *Nice*, in the *fourth* century. It is certain that the title of *Pope* was frequently applied to Pastors in general, as early as the third century. We find *Cyprian* repeatedly called by this title, in the Epistles addressed to him. It was not until a considerable time afterwards, that the Roman Pontiff succeeded in appropriating to himself the title of THE *Pope*, by way of eminence. These examples are exactly in point. A policy which we know to have been adopted in other cases, we have every reason to believe was adopted in that under consideration. In short, our doctrine concerning the rise and progress of Prelacy is not only, in itself, natural and

probable; but it is so remarkably confirmed by early history, and especially by a variety of minute facts incidentally recorded, that my only surprise is, how any candid mind can withstand the evidence in its favour.

LETTER X.

Miscellaneous Remarks—Conclusion.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

I HAVE now nearly completed my review of such parts of Dr. *Bowden*'s volumes, and of Mr. *How*'s pamphlet, as appear to me worthy of notice. I have, indeed, passed over many passages in both, which might justly have been made the objects of severe criticism; but which I considered as either of too little importance to demand animadversion, or so obviously erroneous, as to leave no unprejudiced reader of the least discernment in danger of being led astray by them. It only remains that I make a few miscellaneous remarks, and then close a controversy which I unfeignedly regret that there should ever have been a necessity of beginning.

It was my intention to add another Letter on the *Concessions of Episcopalians*, for the purpose of vindicating and establishing what I had before advanced under this head*; and also of presenting a

* Dr *Bowden* has made an insinuation with regard to *one* of the Episcopal concessions cited in my work, of which it is proper to take notice. He says he has examined *Jewel's Defence of his Apology*, and cannot find the passage which I pro-

number of additional concessions from the works of eminent Episcopal writers. To fulfil the latter purpose, I had made a large collection of extracts from the works of Bishop *Jewel*, Bishop *Andrews*, Bishop *Morton*, Bishop *Hall*, Bishop *Taylor*, Bishop *Burnet*, Bishop *Warburton*, Dr. *Jortin*, and several other Prelates and Divines, all containing sentiments very different from those of Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*, and making concessions of the most decisive kind. But having already drawn out this work to a length greatly beyond my original design, I am constrained to suppress the proposed letter, and to content myself with the Episcopal concessions already laid before the public.

But really, independent of the fear of trespassing on the patience of my readers, there is little use in collecting testimony for such opponents as Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*. However abundant and pointed it may be, they appear to find no difficulty

fess to quote from that work, in my seventh Letter. He therefore infers that I have either taken the quotation at second hand, on the authority of some person who has blundered in the business; or that my references are to a different edition from that which he has consulted. I can assure this *learned professor*, who has, it must be confessed, much reason to plume himself on the fairness and accuracy of his quotations, that I possess a copy of the work from which my citation was made; that my edition is, like that which he professes to have consulted with so much care, (a *folio*, printed in 1570,) and that I am ready, whenever he will please to favour me with a visit, to show him the very words which I have quoted, in the very page referred to as containing them.

in persuading themselves that it is of no value. The unceremonious manner in which Dr. B. rejects testimony is amusing. The testimony of Archbishop *Grindal* is set aside on the ground of his being "somewhat fanatically inclined," and "lax in his discipline." The testimony of *Wickliffe*, on the ground of his being supposed to have embraced error as to other points. The testimony of Dr. *Raignolds* is rejected, because, though a regular member of the Church of *England*, he was a *puritan* at heart. The testimony of Archbishop *Usher* is pronounced to consist only in a *scholastic distinction*, which dull Presbyterians have not perceived; "the difference between him and other "Episcopalians being only *verbal*." That of Bishop *Stillingfleet*, upon the ground of the immaturity of a juvenile mind, the visionary speculations of which were corrected by age. That of Archbishop *Tillotson*, because he was a "a very moderate churchman"——"a sort of neutral man," and withal "suspected of Arianism and Universalism." That of Bishop *Croft*, because his name is so obscure that not one of the Episcopal clergy of this city ever heard of him before; and because he was "a man of very *comprehensive* principles, and an "enemy of all creeds and subscriptions." That of *Mosheim*, because "he had the system of his own Church to maintain*." But when testimony is

* If the testimony of *Mosheim* is to be rejected on this ground, then the testimony of all the Episcopalians quoted by Dr. B. himself, must be set aside on the same ground.

adduced which cannot be set aside by any such frivolous pretext, it is boldly pronounced "worthless," "of no value," perfectly "destitute of force," &c. Nothing can be drawn from testimony. It is waste of time and labour to collect it.

Mr. *How*'s mode of treating the concessions of Episcopalians, is still more ludicrous. He complains that I have produced extracts only from "between *thirty* and *forty* writers;" pronounces this a number too trifling to be regarded as of any weight; and expresses a *suspicion* that he could present a much larger list of Presbyterian writers who have opposed the doctrines of their own Church.—In answer to this plea, I will only say, that when Mr. *How* shall present me with an equally long list of standard Presbyterian writers, who are praised,

Will he agree to this? Besides, I thought Dr. *Bowden* had assured us that the *Lutheran* church is *Episcopal;* and yet Dr. *Mosheim*'s testimony *against* Episcopacy is to be rejected, because he had, "the system of his own church to maintain!" The truth is, the testimony of *Mosheim*, and of other *Lutheran* divines on this subject is peculiarly weighty: for while they have in their church a sort of *qualified* Episcopacy; and while they have as strong a temptation as other churches to place their constitution on the footing of *divine right;* they *unanimously* grant *now*, what they have unanimously granted since the days of *Luther*, that Prelacy is not a divine or apostolic institution; that it was introduced *after* the days of the Apostles; and that it rests on the ground of *human expediency alone.* This fact will weigh more, with every impartial inquirer, than all that the collected learning and zeal of the divines of the church of *England* have ever advanced in favour of Episcopacy, because "they have the system of their own church to maintain."

quoted, studied, and made the *guides* of theological students, and who at the same time oppose our fundamental doctrines, I shall then acknowledge that those doctrines are not the doctrines of the Presbyterian Church.

Were there time to go over in detail the extracts from Episcopal writers which I have presented as *concessions*, it would be easy to show that almost all the glosses of Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* are either irrelevant or worse. But such a process would be an unreasonable trespass on your patience. I have already given a specimen of the mode of answering adopted by the former of these gentlemen, in the case of Bishop *Jewel*. The latter is no less vulnerable in a variety of instances. He tells us, for example, (p. 56.) that Archbishop *Usher* pronounces Presbyterian ordination to be *schismatical*, in all cases excepting that of *necessity* alone. This is not true. *Usher* says neither *this*, nor any thing *like* it. He says, "the ordinations made by *such* "Presbyters as have severed themselves from those "Bishops *unto whom they had sworn canonical obe-* "*dience*, cannot possibly by me be excused from "being *schismatical*;" immediately after which he goes on to say, that he "loves and honours" the Presbyterian Churches of *Holland* and *France*, as "true members of the Church universal;" and that he would with pleasure receive the sacrament from the hands of the ministers in either.*

* *Judgment of the late Archbishop of Armagh.* 110—123.

My argument drawn from the *Practical influence of Prelacy*, has, as I fully expected, both *embarrassed* and *offended* my opponents. But, after all their impatience and irritation under it, and all their cavils against it, I still think it a sound and irresistible argument. If the Episcopal Church, be the *only* true Church, the *only* denomination of professing Christians who are " in covenant with God," then the demand that they should exhibit more of the distinguishing *character* of God's covenant people, viz. *universal holiness*, is surely a reasonable demand. In truth, their mode of replying to this demand amounts to a surrender of the argument. With their subterfuge respecting the *Quakers*, I have already shown that we have nothing to do.

Dr. *Bowden* complains that, in speaking of the *practical influence of Prelacy*, I have expressed myself in terms much too severe concerning Prelates and their system. He complains especially of the following passage: " If we examine the history " of any Episcopal Church on earth, we shall find " it exhibiting, to say the least, *as large* a share of " heresy, contention, and schism, *as any* which " bears the Presbyterian form: and, what is more, " we shall ever find the Prelates themselves quite " *as forward* as any others in scenes of violence " and outrage." He asserts that " these charges " could not have proceeded from a proper motive;" and that, " if they were even well-founded, they ought not to have been advanced." On

what ground Dr. *Bowden* should have taken so much offence at this passage, it is not easy to see. Was it going either an indecent or an unreasonable length, when I was fairly called to speak on the subject, to say, that Prelacy has been proved to be quite *as favourable* to heresy, contention, and schism, as Presbyterianism; and *Prelates* as chargeable with violence and outrage as *Presbyters?* If this was indecent, then what shall be said of this gentleman himself, who has asserted that *every charge* which I have brought against Prelacy "may be retorted upon Presbytery in a *ten-fold* degree?" If my *motives* were bad for merely alleging that Presbyterians stand on *as good* ground, with regard to the practical influence of their system, as Episcopalians do; what must have been the motives of Dr. B. in alleging that the former are *ten-fold worse* than the latter? What must have been his motives in expressing himself frequently in much more severe and indelicate terms of Presbyterians and Presbytery? But the cases are, in his estimation, essentially different. The abuse of Presbyterians is no crime. That this must be his opinion is evident from the reproachful charges which he unreservedly heaps upon them, in those very parts of his work in which he censures me for my unexceptionable comparison.

Dr. *Bowden* still insists that there is peculiar efficacy in the Episcopal form of government in securing the *unity* of the Church; and undertakes to give a contrasted view of Presbyterian and Episco-

pal Churches with respect to this point. I utterly deny the correctness of his alleged facts on this subject; and have no fear in repeating my assertion, that the history of any number of Episcopal Churches exhibits quite as large a share of heresy, contention, and schism, as the history of any corresponding number of Presbyterian Churches. I am perfectly willing to go for an example to the Church of *England*, or to any part of the world, where Prelacy has ever existed; and am sure that no impartial student of ecclesiastical history will be of a different opinion. What does Dr. *Bowden* mean by *unity*, as applied to a Church? Does he mean *unity of spirit*, or *unity of name?* If the latter, then no one who understands Christianity can respect or value it: if the former, then it may be shown, that the Church of *England*, (which probably Dr. B. would consider as the most favourable specimen the world has ever seen,) is, and has long been, as much a stranger to it, as any of her neighbours. If all manner of discordant sentiment; if every grade of heresy, from that of *Arminius*, to the cold, gloomy, semi-deistical scheme of *Socinus;* if the constant public manifestation of this discordance, and of these contending heresies; and that not only among the people, and the inferior clergy, but also among the Prelates themselves; if embracing multitudes of clergy who disbelieve her *Articles*, who dislike her *Liturgy*, and who yet have consciences which admit of their canonically swearing to the belief and support of both;—if these things

constitute *unity*, then indeed she may be said to possess it. But this is a kind of unity of which the Apostles knew nothing, and which, if they were now on earth, they would pronounce of no value. There is unspeakably more real *unity* among all the different portions of Presbyterians in the *United States*, though called by different names, than exists, or has for near 200 years existed, in the Church of *England*, though nominally *one*. They have the same confession of Faith, the same mode of worship, the same form of church government, and are, in all important points, so entirely united, that many of their best members often wonder and lament, that they are not one in *name* as well as in *reality*.

With respect to the doctrine of *Uninterrupted Succession*, I have little to add to what is contained in my former Letters. Dr. *Bowden* is indeed right in suspecting that I lay no great stress on this doctrine, as he understands and states it. That there always *has* been, since the days of Christ, and that there always *will* be to the end of the world, a true Church, and a true and valid gospel ministry, in that Church, I firmly believe. But as to the *historical proof* that this succession in the ministry has never been *interrupted*, by any event which might be called an *irregular* or *uncanonical ordination*, I neither care for it, nor believe in it. The promise of the Saviour that neither the church nor her ministry shall ever become extinct, is

enough to satisfy me. That the succession in this ministry will be kept up in the *same exact manner* in every age, I consider neither Scripture nor common sense as requiring me to believe. There is no Presbyterian who contends more zealously for a strict adherence to ecclesiastical rules than I am disposed to do; nor one who deems it of more importance that we set our faces against every kind of spurious investiture, and that we retain the scriptural method of ordination by the *laying on of the hands of the Presbytery;* yet I have no hesitation in saying, that if it were to be discovered, that, about *two hundred* or *five hundred* years ago, the regular succession of our ordinations had been really interrupted by some ecclesiastical oversight or disorder, I should not consider it as in the least degree affecting either the legitimacy of our present ministry, or the validity of our present ordinances.

The learned and acute Episcopal divine, *Chillingworth*, if I understand him, takes the same ground, and views the subject in the same light. Though he is a warm advocate for the apostolical institution of Prelacy; yet he evidently considers the doctrine of uninterrupted succession, and especially the idea of attaching fundamental importance to it, as a Popish error; and the *historic proof* of the *fact* as equally ridiculous and impossible*.

* See his *Safe Way of Salvation*, Part 1. Chapters 2. & 6.

Dr. *Bowden*, however, objects that, even on Presbyterian principles, the Episcopal succession is better than ours; or rather that ours is utterly invalid, because, at the æra of the Reformation, the Presbyters, in different parts of *Europe*, who first began to ordain, had not the ordaining power *specifically* or *professedly* imparted to them by the Bishops who ordained them; so that they did not even stand on equal ground with modern Presbyterian ministers, on whom in their ordination, the ordaining power is formally bestowed. But this objection has no force. The Popish doctrine, "that it is the *intention* of the administrator which constitutes the validity of an ecclesiastical ordinance," is discarded by all Protestants. And as the first Presbyters who undertook to ordain, after emerging from the darkness of Popery, were regularly invested with the power of preaching the gospel, and administering sacraments, all Presbyterians consider the right to ordain as necessarily included in those powers, whether the fact be mentioned, or even thought of at the time of ordination or not.

Dr. *Bowden*, toward the close of his last letter, expresses much irritated feeling at my having represented clerical imparity as a "*Popish* doctrine." He demands, in a tone to which I forbear to give a name, whether I "know what *Popery* is?" In the next page he calls upon me to "lay my hand upon "my heart, and in the fear of God to say, whether "I do not think that I have most grossly libelled

"the whole Episcopal Church throughout the "world;" and adds, that "something explicit upon this point will be expected from me." This good gentleman shall have "something explicit." Let me assure him, then, that, after the most serious and conscientious review of all that I have written, I am so far from thinking that I have "libelled" the Episcopal Church in representing Prelacy as a "*Popish* doctrine," that all my inquiries convince me, more than ever, of the justness of my representation, and embolden me to repeat and urge it with new confidence. In answer to Dr. *Bowden's* question, what is *Popery?* I answer, *Popery*, strictly speaking, as was remarked in a former Letter, is the ecclesiastical supremacy usurped by the Bishop of *Rome*. But, more generally speaking, it implies that *system of corruption*, both in doctrine, government, and practice, which characterizes, and has, for nearly 1500 years, characterized the *Romish* or *Latin* Church. Hence *Transubstantiation*, *Purgatory*, *Auricular Confession*, the worship of *Images*, the invocation of *Saints*, and the adoration of the *Cross*, are all spoken of by the most accurate writers, as *Popish errors;* although most of them had crept into the Church, long before the period which Dr. *Bowden* assigns for the rise of the Papal usurpation; and although none of them, excepting perhaps the first, could ever be traced to the Roman Pontiff himself as their immediate author.

I say then, again, that, in this sense, clerical im-

parity is a "Popish error," nearly coeval in its rise with the commencement of the Papacy; originating from the same source; and tending, in a degree, to the same mischief. And though I would by no means place the former of these errors on a *par* with the latter; nor venture to pronounce the one, as I do the other, an *anti-christian* abuse, being fully persuaded that many of the greatest and best men that ever lived have been friends of Prelacy; yet all my inquiries have more and more confirmed me in the persuasion, that it is a real and a mischievous departure from apostolic simplicity, and that it first arose from the same principle of clerical ambition which gave rise to the Papacy. I hope this is "explicit" enough.

Nor is this all. When I look over the charges and reasonings urged by the Popish writers, against the *Waldenses* and *Albigenses*, as they are preserved and exhibited in *Perrin*'s history of those illustrious witnesses for the truth; when I read the language used by the Popish persecutors of the English Reformers, as it is recorded in different parts of *Fox's Acts and Monuments;* when I examine the cavils and objections made by *Harding*, *Saunders*, *Stapleton*, *Campian*, and other zealous Catholics, against the Church of *England;* and when I look into the writings which *Chillingworth*, in his *Safe way of Salvation*, examines and refutes, I could almost fancy myself listening to the pleas of some high-toned Episcopalians in the *United States* against their Presbyterian neighbours. Could you

make it convenient to examine those writings for yourselves, you would find in them so large a portion of the same reasonings, and the same language, which are now found in certain Episcopal writers; so much of the same cry, in exactly or nearly the same words, about *the Church! the true Church! the Apostolic Church!* so much of the same kind of charges, respecting *schism*, departure from the *covenanted way of salvation*, loss of the *Apostolic succession*, and having no *true priesthood*, or *valid ordinances*, as would fill you with astonishment, if not with emotions of a more unfavourable nature. Nor would your astonishment be at all diminished by finding, as you would find, that the friends of the Church of *England*, in defending themselves and their cause against the writers in question, resorted, in a multitude of instances, to the very same scriptural authorities, and the very same arguments, which Presbyterians employ against the high-toned Prelatists of the present day!—Reflect seriously on these facts, and then ask yourselves, whether Dr. *Bowden* has any just reason to complain of me for speaking of an affinity between *his* claims and those of *Popery?* I have, indeed, repeatedly suggested the idea of such an affinity, and distinctly *meant* to do so. I have done it, however, without passion, and without any wish to give unnecessary pain; but with a calm, deliberate, and firm conviction, that the suggestion was well-founded. And I can assure the gentlemen who have written so much and so resentfully for the

purpose of removing it, that their publications are far, very far, from having diminished the force of this conviction.

I have now, my Brethren, completed my examination of such parts of Dr. *Bowden*'s and Mr. *How*'s Letters as I deem worthy of notice. It was my intention, after the example of the former of these gentlemen, to collect and present in one view, a catalogue of the "misrepresentations," "unfounded assertions," "mistakes," and "omissions," with which their pages abound. But finding these "misrepresentations," &c. to be so *numerous*, that a mere list of them, without comment, would fill another long letter; and many of them of so *disreputable* and *offensive* a character as not to be contemplated, even by opponents, without much commisseration for their authors; I have determined to spare myself the pain of writing, and you of reading such a Letter; and here to take a final leave of the subject. I engaged in this controversy, without the least expectation of convincing Episcopalians, or of bringing over to my own opinion an individual of that communion; but solely for the purpose of satisfying and confirming Presbyterians. My object, I have the pleasure to know, is attained; and perceiving no further advantage in prolonging the controversy, I now lay down the pen; nor can I foresee any event that will ever tempt me to resume it on this subject.

I take for granted that all the gentlemen who

have already appeared as my opponents, will again come before the public in reply to these Letters; and will endeavour to persuade their readers that I have again misrepresented them and their cause, and again laid myself open to the heaviest charges and the severest reproach. All this and more I deliberately expect from gentlemen who have generally manifested a wish to have the last word. Should my expectation be realized, it will give me no uneasiness; nor shall I ever, (according to my present views,) take the least public notice of any thing that they may say. If, indeed, I should hereafter discover any *important errors* in the foregoing pages, (*trivial* ones, which do not affect the main question, will probably be discovered and pointed out,) I shall consider it as a duty which I owe to *you* to correct them. But with the controversy, as such, it is my firm resolution to have nothing more to do. This resolution is formed and expressed, not out of any disrespect to the gentlemen in question; but from a deliberate conviction that enough has been said on the Presbyterian side of the argument; and that my time and pen may be hereafter devoted to objects more agreeable to myself, and more useful to others.

That the high-toned class of our Episcopal brethren will, in any respect, alter their tone, either of speaking or writing, I have no expectation; nor have I the least anxiety that they should. Having provided the antidote, I am perfectly indifferent how often or how long the poison may be dissemi-

nated. Let them hereafter sing the praises of *their truly primitive and apostolic Church* as loudly and as confidently as they please. Let them arrogate to themselves the honour of having the only *true priesthood*, and the only *valid ordinances* in the land. Let them embrace every occasion of pronouncing that *we*, as Presbyterians, are *rebels* and *schismatics*, and *out of the covenanted way of salvation*. I trust, my brethren, that not an individual among us has any feelings which are capable of being wounded by such language. Were we inhabitants of *South-Britain*, where all the smiles of government, and all the treasures of the nation, not only give confidence to language of this kind, but also impart to it no small degree of efficacy, we might feel it as a mortifying grievance. But in this country, where governmental preferences among religious denominations are unknown, and where *numbers* as well as *truth*, are, by a great preponderance, on the side of Presbyterians, we may listen to the most obtrusive promulgation of such claims, with perfect indifference, or, at the utmost, with a smile.

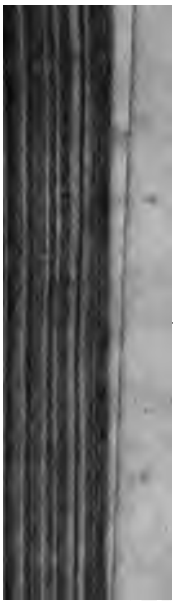
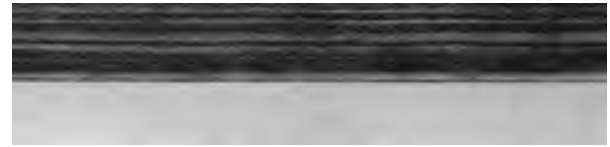
That it is our earnest desire to live in peace and harmony with our brethren of the Episcopal church, you can all bear witness. For them, I can truly say, that I entertain a high respect; and am happy to number individuals of that communion among my most valued friends. I know, also, that many of that denomination entirely disapprove, and deeply lament, the offensive writings of their own cler-

gy, which have produced this controversy. Were I capable of applying to *such* persons many of the remarks which I have been compelled to apply, in the foregoing pages, to Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How*, I should deem myself one of the most uncandid and unjust of men. And, I will add, that it would give me much pain, if any thing in this, or my preceding volume, should be considered as pointing at Episcopalians of that liberal class. Differences of opinion there are, and will be, between us; but if these differences are maintained on both sides with that spirit *which the Holy Ghost teacheth*, they will neither foster the *wrath of man*, nor interfere with real christian unity. Continue, then, I intreat you, to cherish on your part a spirit of amity and conciliation whatever reception it may meet with. Be always ready to exhibit your share, and more than your share, of this temper. And then, whatever may be the result, it will *turn to you for a testimony*. Remember that the haughty language, or the unscriptural claims of the most uncharitable of our Episcopal brethren, cannot possibly injure us; but that we shall always injure ourselves exactly in proportion as we lose sight of that holy spirit which adorned and united the disciples of Christ in the days of apostolic purity, and which compelled even their enemies to exclaim, "Behold how these Christians love one another!"

Whether your Pastors are lawful ministers, and the ordinances which they dispense legitimate ordinances, are questions which, happily, it is not for

Dr. *Bowden* and Mr. *How* to decide. There is a day approaching when they will be decided before a higher Tribunal, and with consequences more interesting than language can express. Happy will it be for us if, in that day, we shall all be found members of that holy Church, which the divine Redeemer hath purchased with his blood, and adorned with his Spirit! Happy will it be for your ministers, if they shall be found, in that day, to have *preached not themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and themselves your servants for Jesus' sake!* And happy will it be for you, my brethren, if it shall then appear that you have not rested in rites and forms; but that you have *received the truth in the love of it;* that *Christ* has been formed *in you the hope of glory;* and that you belong to that *chosen generation, that royal priesthood, that holy nation, that peculiar people, who shall for ever show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light!* That this blessedness may be shared by you, and equally by them also, whom, in this controversy, we have been called to oppose, is the unfeigned prayer of,

My Christian Brethren,

Your affectionate Servant in the Gospel,

SAMUEL MILLER.